ANDROS OF EPHESUS

J.E. COPUS

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"He is the life of her life, her joy, her recompense. For him she thinks, speaks, moves, breathes." Page 190.

ANDROS OF EPHESUS

A Tale of Early Christianity

BY THE

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"The Son of Siro, A Story of Lazarus," "Harry Russell," "St. Cuthbert's," "Shadows Lifted," "Tom Losely: Boy," "The Making of Mortlake," "As Gold in the Furnace," Etc., Etc.

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To

The Most Reverend

JAMES EDWARD QUIGLEY, D. D.

Archbishop of Chicago,

Whose Approbation Has Ever Been An

Inspiration, This Volume is

Respectfully Dedicated

By the Author

of Ephesus, he felt a glow of national pride that the place of his birth possessed one of the wonders of the world.

Had one been near him and watched his face closely, however, on this particular afternoon, there might have been discovered indications of trouble, as shown in the sadness of the eyes and in the lines about the mouth. Strange and disquieting thoughts had recently entered the mind of Andros, the Ephesian, concerning the worship of Diana—thoughts that he could not understand and difficulties which he was unable to solve.

So general was the cultus of the great goddess that he was aware that he could not with safety confide his difficulties even to his nearest friend, yet they were real and tangible to him, and startling because of their newness and for the persistency with which they appeared to demand consideration. He was much disquieted. He remained stationary for a long time, his gaze fixed upon the temple, while his active mind was busy with the problems that had presented themselves.

At last he realized that the sun was about to drop behind the western clouds. Arousing himself from his revery with an impatient shrug of the shoulders, he turned and walked down the narrow path of the southern slope of Mount Coressus until he came to the substantial farmhouse of one of his

tenants. He was surprised and not unpleased to find that several of the neighboring vine-growers had gathered under the modest portico to spend the evening in rest and conversation and in the enjoyment of each other's company. He welcomed the gathering as a distraction from his own too exacting thoughts.

"Hail, friend! may the great goddess be kind to all," said Andros, as he approached.

"Thou art kind, good Andros; may the great Diana prosper thy vines, for thy rent will be in proportion to their yield," answered a man about fifty years of age. He was florid of face and appeared to be a good patron of his own wine vats.

When Andros had saluted all his friends and had taken his seat among them, the conversation which his coming had interrupted was resumed.

"Hast heard the news, friend Andros?" inquired the red-faced speaker.

"That there will be no Artemision festivities next spring?" said Andros facetiously.

Every one knew that the cessation of the games and procession in honor of Diana and the glory of Ephesus was among the last of improbabilities. All laughed at the sally of humor.

"No, good Callinus," continued Andros, "I have heard nought. Keep me not in suspense. Is the divine emperor dead?"

"Not far from the southern fountain,"

answered the one addressed, "down on the level land outside the city wall, have come to dwell a strange company of men and women. Thou dost remember that since old Pelopidas lost his house and vine lands because of his too great love for the dice-box, and for being too good a customer at the taverns he supplied with wine—thou dost remember that his house has been unoccupied since that time?"

"I am aware that the house has been empty for several months," said Andros.

"A company of men and women have come to live there. They are mysterious beings, for they go to none of the temples, and are never seen in the courts or grove of Diana."

"That is not so wonderful," remarked Andros. "Remember, friend, that there are eighteen other temples erected to the different gods within the walls of Ephesus. It may be they worship in one of these."

"Not so," said Aratus, another of the company, who appeared to bear no particular good-will towards Andros; "not so, for they go to none of these temples. I have watched them and know. Your surmise is not correct."

"Perhaps you can inform us who they are and what they are doing," said Andros, just a little nettled.

"Twice have I passed their house," continued Aratus, "and heard singing. I en-

deavored to catch the words, but could not make much of them. I am sure they cannot be in honor of Diana."

"Thou art probably correct," said Andros; "the worship of Diana does not consist in singing, as thou knowest, but rather in dancing and in processions."

"That is true," interrupted Callinus. "Nothing in the world equals our ritual processions. Wonderful is Diana of Ephesus, the mother of the gods!"

"They are a quiet company," continued Aratus, "and come from no one knows where. The women are introducing a strange custom here, for they generally go veiled."

"Perhaps they are Jews," suggested one of the company. "Thou knowest there are many wealthy Jews of Syria living at Ephesus. It may be that these are some less wealthy people of the same nation."

"The men are quiet and unassuming," continued Aratus, "and appear to be refined and sociable. They talk intelligently about vine-growing and appear to possess skill in wine-making. I saw one man with a large basket today, and he was selecting the choicest clusters in the vineyard. When urged to tell why he did this, he changed the subject of our conversation—gracefully enough I grant—and spoke about the fertility of the soil and the beauty of the morges."

"Are the women beautiful?" enquired Callinus. "If they are, and the men are as sociable as Aratus declares, 'twould be worth while visiting them, and then we could learn more about them."

The project of visiting the new settlers in the neighborhood appeared to meet with general approval, and it was decided that a visit should soon be made. They had forgotten that the grape harvest was to begin on the following day. The visit was long delayed, and before the wine pressing was finished was forgotten by most of those who had agreed to make it.

CHAPTER II

IN THE GRIP OF DOUBT

After the neighbors had departed from the portico, Andros sat a long time in the moonlight pondering the thoughts that had lately come to him. He was of a more thoughtful disposition than most of his countrymen. Greek by descent, he had inherited the keenness of intellect of that race, and he wanted to see the reason of things. Traditional beliefs did not appeal to him merely because they had been handed down to him by his forefathers.

At this time there was a restlessness in his soul, the cause of which he could ill define. Questions had arisen which he could not solve. He would have repudiated with indignant scorn any thought of infidelity to the goddess of his birthplace. To him Diana was supreme, and the influence of her cultus entered into his life in a larger way than was customary with most young men of his time.

Splendidly muscular and in good physical condition, it was impossible to attribute his unsatisfactory mental state to some approaching sickness. He laughed at this thought when he looked at the knots of

muscles on his bare arms, or felt them working across his shoulders as he exercised himself. There was nothing wrong with his nerves, but there was an uneasiness of mind —a something within him which craved satisfaction—and he knew not how or where to get the relief he sought.

Andros, at the present time, had not succeeded in defining to himself the cause of his uneasiness. Being in perfect health, and living much in the open air, he was not one given to morbid introspection, yet he was aware that the gratification of mere animal excitement of the great spectacles, or the wild music of the ritual processions, or the athletic games with which the feasts of Diana were celebrated, were not sufficient, or of a kind to satisfy the unrest in his soul. For a time he had mounted to a higher intellectual plane and had taken pleasure in poetry, and in the philosophical discussions which were held in the amphitheatre during the Artemision festival, and even at other times of the year. But all these had at length palled, and there remained the unrest for which he could give no account.

He was sufficiently keen of mind to realize that the present method of worshipping the goddess, with all its exuberance and orgiastic tendencies and practices, was, and of necessity must be, a degeneration from what he conceived must have been the simplicity of her original worship. He could not

bring himself to believe that unbridled intemperance did honor to a deity, and yet he saw this was the common practice among the votaries of Diana in Ephesus and throughout Lydia. The instincts of his naturally upright mind revolted at the excesses of the times. After a long series of excogitations he became convinced that these practices, which had grown up around the worship of Diana as the mother of all living, or as Hecate, the ruler of hell, or as Luna, the ever-changeable one, were excesses and not originally intended or practiced. His naturally correct instinct rebelled, and yet he was at a loss how to seek a better way to satisfy the cravings of his soul, or to change the present method of his worship.

He knew full well what his fate would be were he bold enough to deny the divinity of the Ephesian goddess. He had no intention of doing this. He knew that at the next festival of Diana he would shout as loud as the rest, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." He took a natural pride in her worship, yet of late there seemed to be something in this very worship that repelled him.

Many customs were distasteful to him. Among others, he realized that that of sanctuary had grown into a national abuse. He saw that this custom drew together to Ephesus all the worst criminals even from as far away as Pontus and Syria and Egypt,

from Macedonia and far-off Gaul. He was aware that it was a custom in all the great temples throughout the world, but, looking at the abuse of the privilege as he saw it in his own city, and being impressed with the dark side of the picture only, he failed to see its value.

There were many other things that puzzled him. Why were such immoral men as the priests of Diana were known to be chosen or allowed to minister at her altars? It puzzled him that the worship of the goddess always took the form of spectacles or games, and was always followed by debauchery rather than supplication. How could the daughter of Jupiter and Latona be pleased with such a perverted worship?

"At all events," he mused, alone in the beautiful moonlight, "the great Diana receives true worship, for are not flowers, fruits and even animals sacrificed to her? Yes, we have the true notion of worship, for something is destroyed in sacrifice to show the deity's supreme dominion. But oh! is Diana a real being after all? Is she not merely an abstraction, some broken fragment of a thought, as it were, rendered concrete in her images and in her temples, to hold the vulgar mind? Supposing she be merely that and nothing more—an abstract idea—is it worthy of the mind of man to give worship and adoration to something so intangible? There must be something greater

and more substantial behind all this. Oh, if I could only get at the truth! Would that some great teacher would arise to purge the worship of the huntress goddess of the accretions of the ages! Would that some great philosopher would come and restore our pristine worship, and with it our pristine virtues! There must be a truer, higher worship than that which we see all around us. Would that I could fathom the mystery!"

These and similar thoughts passed through the young man's mind, injecting into it a jumble of ideas which he was unable to explain or set in order.

Andros was not morbid. His physical condition was too excellent for him to suffer this disease of weaklings. Yet at times he was sorely perplexed at life's puzzles, although he enjoyed the good things of the world with the zest of youth. He was not yet thirty years old. He had inherited his father's not inconsiderable fortune, consisting of the large vineyard on the southern slope of Coressus, two or three large houses within the city walls and several sailing vessels which carried on a lucrative trade between Ephesus and the islands of the Aegean sea. Some of the larger vessels sailed to Attalia in Pampylia, Paphos in Cyprus, Caesarea, and even to Alexandria. He also held the privilege, inherited from his father and confirmed to him by the Chancellor of the city, of taking fish from the great Silenusian

lakes in the north. These fish were sold daily in the agora venalis at a great profit, for the Ephesians were a luxury-loving people, and the product of these fresh-water lakes was regarded as a great delicacy.

The father of Andros had left these various sources of wealth in the hands of good stewards. The young man, therefore, had little to do but to receive the profits and daily add gold to his coffers. Of a naturally upright character, Andros had not let his newly acquired wealth turn his head. He continued to live a clean life and was much out-of-doors, and was a fair specimen of stalwart manhood.

He was not tall—the Ephesians were in general of shorter stature than their Roman subjugators. He was about five feet nine inches in height. He ordinarily wore the prevailing costume of the people of Asia Minor—a vest with long tight sleeves reaching to the wrists, long pantaloons descending to the ankles and ornamented with a colored zigzag pattern. Over the vest was a wide sleeveless tunic, clasped on the shoulder and confined at the waist by a girdle, and when long gathered up by another girdle lower down. His hair, black as night, was rather long and fell nearly to his shoulders from beneath the ordinary Phrygian cap, made of soft white wool and rising to a point which projected forward.

The eyes of Andros were his prominent

feature. They were large and lustrous and of a dark blue. A high, broad, exceedingly white forehead appeared whiter in contrast with the heavy, straight black eyebrows which almost touched in the middle. The nose was straight and purely Grecian, indicating his Hellenic descent. The color of health shone on his cheek-bones and on his lips, which were firm. The jaw was large and its contour denoted strong determination. The whole countenance was that of a thoughtful man. There was something masterful in all his actions; in the decision of his tones, and in the sturdy swing of limbs as he walked. One would designate him a man whom it would be dangerous to antagonize, yet who could and would be a loving friend.

The evening when the story opens Andros sat long under the portico of his tenant's villa in the vineyard, trying to puzzle out the questions which had tortured him more persistently than ever of late.

"Ah! I know what I will do," he said to himself at the end of his cogitations. "To-morrow I will go out beyond the stadium and I will talk to Lydda. She is more clever than I. Perhaps she will be able to explain some of the difficulties that beset me. Oh! Lydda! Lydda!" he exclaimed passionately, "if thou but knew of the flames burning in my heart for thee! How long must I wait thy timid bashfulness before I dare ask

thee to be mine! O great Artemis! cure a lover's pangs! At least to-morrow I go not as a lover, but as a searcher after knowledge."

CHAPTER III

A MAID OF EPHESUS

The marble villa of Mellanides shone with such brilliancy in the morning sun as to be almost blinding. Built on an eminence and surrounded on three sides by the windings of the river Caystrus, near to the sacred and luxuriant grove of Diana, it was regarded as the most elegant residence in the city of Ephesus. It was situated over a mile away from the northern city gate and was some distance from the main travelled road to Sardis and Smyrna. It was secluded and was rarely visited by travellers passing through Ephesus, although the citizens considered it as one of their glories. Along the road leading to it, which was in a way an imitation of the Roman Via Appia, there were many other mansions, but none approached that of Mellanides in stateliness or in the magnificence of its furnishings.

Nearly every known country in the world had been laid under contribution to gratify the taste or the luxury of the family whose proud possession it was. The rarest of pictures, Greek statuary, rugs, carpets and choicest tapestries were found there in profusion. The friends of Mellanides—and he

had many, for in his prime he had been an elaborate entertainer—had prophesied to him that it was only a matter of time when the priests and priestesses would take possession of the house and convert it into a temple in honor of Diana Luna, which was about the only title under which the goddess had no temple dedicated to her in Ephesus.

Old Mellanides was choleric when the subject was mentioned. He often took the remarks of his friends more seriously than they intended he should. He was determined never to give up his house. When the subject was mentioned in his hearing he would wind his toga closely around his body, walk the length of the peristyle two or three times, as if working his anger up to the point of speech, and begin:

"Never, never, friends! I am a faithful worshipper of the chaste huntress, as all good Ephesians should be, but they shall never take my villa from me. When I die, it goes intact to my Lydda. I have not served the emperor for nought, nor did my father serve him in his legions to be forgotten. Let the chief priestess or any of those rascally priests set foot here, and I will on the instant be off to Rome! No, friends, they dare not molest the emperor's friend."

"And while you are gone they will take possession, and spirit away your daughter," some one would remark, more for the sake of teasing than belief in his own words.

"Woe betide them should they attempt the one or the other. The imperial ruler of the world would send a legion for my safety if necessary. I tell thee, I am near the throne. I am a friend of the emperor."

Whether the facts were as Mellanides stated, or his words were the product of an overfond and loyal imagination, it would be difficult to decide. They had the effect, however, of keeping the old soldier happy.

On the morning following the long excogitation of Andros, Lydda sat in the shade of the marble pillars of the peristyle of her father's villa. She was surrounded by a number of serving maids, whose duty it was to attend to her slightest wish. Seated on a marble bench piled high with cushions and over the back of which she had thrown her crimson peplum, or cloak, she held in her hands a large bunch of red roses which contrasted strongly with her simple white Grecian costume. Roses lay scattered around her feet, and on the steps that led down to the impluvium, or large tank of water in the open court of the house. Some red blossoms had fallen into the water and lay floating like great drops of blood on the quiet surface. Two white swans moved lazily about in the water. On the farther low wall of the impluvium were two metallic-hued peacocks, one of which had spread his gorgeous tail feathers as if for the delectation of his mistress. In the centre of the impluvium was

a marble group representing Aphrodite rising from the sea, attended by nymphs.

In strong contrast to the marble walls and pillars were, here and there, ebony hued Nubian slaves, whose brass bands on the upper arm and on the wrist shone and glistened in the sun. The whiteness of the low parapet around the body of water was relieved by richly wrought brass vases filled with cut flowers of brilliant colors and delicate perfume, or with boxes of rare plants.

Ever and anon, in the pursuit of the business of his office, would appear from the atrium or from one or other of the domestic offices, the steward of the palace, clad in a long robe of many gorgeous colors and bearing a wand. Although he did not approach Lydda, he kept himself well within sight and call in case he should be required for any service by the mistress of the household.

The scene was one of refined beauty in its wealth of color contrasts. A gentle breeze suddenly stirred the waters of the impluvium and wafted the roses here and there, making little moving islands of crimson.

Lydda remained seated on the marble bench while her handmaidens, in pink, and pale blue, and light orange robes, busied themselves with making festoons. They unconsciously grouped themselves in artistic poses about her. Suddenly the steward made a hurried entrance from the atrium

and approached his mistress as if he would speak.

"What is it, Cassus?"

"Most gracious lady," said the steward, "there has just arrived from beyond Mount Coressus the young Andros, who craves to be admitted to thy presence."

"Admit him."

The steward bowed low and retired. Womanlike, the mistress of the house instinctively put her hands to her hair to satisfy herself that the Grecian coil was in perfect condition. One of the handmaids threw a light, gauzy peplum of delicate lavender color around her shoulders.

Lydda arose when Andros appeared at the entrance of the open court.

"Welcome, my friend. Thou art early abroad," she said, as she stretched forth her long slender arm. Andros touched the tapering fingers to his lips. Had she been a goddess he could not have shown her more reverence. He was sure of just the welcome he had received—that of a friend, but nothing more. He would have given half his wealth to have been able to notice a little embarrassment in her, a little twitching of the lips, or fluttering of the eyelids, or a slightly heightened color. No sign of an emotional movement was visible. He sighed, and more vehemently than he was aware of.

"Art in trouble, Andros?" asked Lydda, as she resumed her seat on the cushioned

bench, "Come, sit beside me, and it may happen that I may be of assistance. Come."

They sat together. At a given signal from their mistress the attendants withdrew to the corners of the open court, where they could easily be beckoned to should their services be required, but could not hear what was spoken.

"Now, good friend, tell me thy trouble," said Lydda.

"'Tis naught, fair lady, but what I hope will be cured in time."

"But men do not sigh for trifles."

"Nor was it a trifle, Lydda, for which I sighed."

Although Andros had known Lydda from early years, and their families had been fast friends, he had never, as yet, allowed himself to appear formally as the lover of Lydda. He took advantage of their early acquaintanceship to be frequently in her company, and each time he visited her and old Mellanides more fuel was added to the fire of his unspoken love. He knew that she was vastly his superior in point of wealth as the heiress and only child of the old soldier, and yet he was conscious that his own daily increasing fortune was already of no small proportions. It was not the disparity of the goods of fortune that made him hesitate.

He was aware that there were more prospective suitors than himself for the hand of Lydda. He knew, at least from hearsay,

that Metellus, the pro-consul, desired her hand for his son who was in Rome. He was aware also that Aratus, although not nearly as wealthy as himself—possessing only a fine vineyard on the southern side of Coressus—aspired to be considered a suitor. The real cause of his own reticence was that he was so deeply enamored of the charms of the playmate of former years since she had grown to womanhood that he actually feared to venture and—lose.

"There are many things in my mind which are puzzling me," he continued, "and I have come to my childhood's friend to see whether she cannot assist me to solve some of the riddles."

The daughter of Mellanides remained silent, expecting Andros to continue. Instead of proceeding, he sat with his hand under his chin and his elbow resting on his knee, watching the drifting roses in the water of the impluvium.

"We are like those flowers," he said at length, "blown hither and thither by the breezes of circumstance. It cannot be, dear Lydda, that a man's life and his hereafter are dependent on the mere chances of fate. My reason revolts at such a thought, and yet—and yet—"

He paused, as if unable to put the thoughts that had been so recently disturbing him so much into suitable words.

"Thou feelest as I do, Andros," said the

maiden at his side, "nor can I assent to the national and universal mode of worship of the great Diana. Why call her the chaste goddess if her worship consists mainly of things neither chaste nor temperate? If Diana dwells among the Immortals in the heavens, it seems to me that she cannot delight in the orgies indulged in here on the earth on the occasion of her festivals."

"Thou art ever more clever than I. Thou puttest my thoughts into words. There must be something wrong, as thou sayest. Oh! that I could see wherein to change it all!"

"And in the attempt get thyself torn to pieces by an angry populace? No, friend Andros, thou shalt not attempt so dangerous a task."

"I care not for the danger, Lydda, if I knew what to do, and what to believe."

"Of this be sure," said Lydda, leaning towards him in her earnestness, "if this religion of Diana be wrong—"

"Oh, say not so! I would not for the world unsettle thy faith in the great goddess!" exclaimed Andros.

He was of too loyal a nature to disturb the faith of Lydda on account of the difficulties he found in it for himself. For an instant he saw the dreary horrors of the quagmire of absolute infidelity, and realized as never before how necessary a belief of some kind is to every human being.

"Be not afraid," said Lydda, to his relief, "that I am about to forsake the faith of my ancestors, and our people's glory. What I mean is this: if the worship of Diana be wrong, time will reform it. The gross and the evil in it will slip away."

"I fear you are mistaken. It has grown worse and more gross and sensual with the ages. The very beginning of the worship was frenzy. You know, Lydda, that the statue now in the principal shrine of the temple, so tradition tells us, is supposed to have fallen from heaven. Its discoverers went mad, and those who placed it in the first rude temple became insane and slew each other at the altar."

"Oh, but such things cannot be the intention of the goddess!" exclaimed Lydda.

"They have existed, nevertheless, as long as there has been a worship of the mother of the gods," replied Andros. "Murder and bloodshed have always been a part of her ritual. 'Tis all a mystery. I will consult Cleomenes, the Athenian philosopher, who has lately come to Ephesus, when next I see him. He will certainly be able to explain to us much that is at present dark and difficult to understand."

"Ah, do so, my good friend, and bring me word. Thou art not more interested in the answers he shall give than I. Wilt thou walk, Andros, to the rose-garden?"

They prepared to go out to the rose-

garden, but further conversation on the subject that interested them so deeply was interrupted by the appearance of Mellanides. He was somewhat garrulous in his advanced years. He always regarded Andros as an old friend of the family and did not stand on ceremony with him.

"Welcome, welcome, boy," he said heartily, as soon as he caught sight of him. "Come, and I will show thee my late roses and my grapes. Hast harvested thine own grapes yet, Andros? Farewell, daughter, for a short time. We will return before the noonday meal."

"No, no," replied Lydda, "I will come with you. I want to see the last of the roses."

"Thou always hast thine own way. Come, then," said the old father, fondly.

CHAPTER IV

ARATUS BEGINS HIS PLOTTING

The autumn and winter passed and Andros found himself still perplexed and no nearer to a solution of his difficulties. The incongruities of the cultus of Diana appeared to him even greater than ever. He was religious by nature, and the cravings of his soul remained unsatisfied. For him the void could not be filled by indulging in intemperance or in grosser crimes.

He had often discussed his difficulties with Cleomenes, the Athenian philosopher, but without receiving any satisfaction. The sage was pretentious but shallow, and Andros obtained very little assistance from him. Finding that he received no benefit whatever from his platitudes, he finally ceased to visit him, and was again thrown upon his own resources.

Nor had the frequent discussions with Lydda helped him. These had only increased his difficulties, for he saw with growing alarm that the woman he so devotedly loved was becoming—at least he thought she was—unsettled in her own belief. Whatever difficulties it might be his misfortune to

encounter, whatever mental tortures he might be compelled to undergo, he was determined, if possible, to keep Lydda firm in her belief in the divinity of the goddess. He fully realized that some belief in a higher power was a woman's only safeguard.

He saw with a perspicacity which was, perhaps, unusual for one of his years, that from a doubt of the correctness of the method of worship there would eventually arise a doubt as to the truth of the worship itself. This he was determined to prevent with regard to Lydda, and with this end in view he had lately appeared more loyal and devoted to the goddess when in the presence of the woman he longed to make his wife. Come what may to himself, he frequently resolved, there should nothing happen to the daughter of Mellanides if it were in his power to prevent it.

There was another source of anxiety for Andros over and above the difficulties of mind which had grown out of a natural repugnance to what was base and low, into which he saw plainly the national religion had degenerated. The other anxiety which gnawed constantly was the thought of the danger of losing, or of not winning, the woman he loved.

On several occasions of late when visiting the house of Mellanides he had seen Aratus in close and earnest conversation with Lydda. More than once when he had made a

sudden and unexpected entry into the peristyle he had noticed the flushed and excited face of Aratus. Was Aratus making love to her? There was always one grain of comfort for him on these occasions. With the lover's jealous eye he had seen with a certain amount of relief that Lydda appeared unmoved and unemotional. This was his consolation, that however passionate the pleadings of Aratus may have been, she to whom they were addressed did not appear to reciprocate them in the least degree.

He did not fail to notice on these occasions the gestures of annoyance on the part of Aratus at his intrusion. More than once he caught sight of an ugly leer on his rival's face which he realized portended no good for him. He knew that Aratus was unscrupulous, but he was not aware that he would stop at no means to gain his end. Andros did not realize this. Being a sincere character himself he did not suspect evil in others. Had he known the world better he would have realized that a man can have no greater enemy than a rival lover.

Aratus had learned enough from the artless talk of Lydda to discover the somewhat peculiar tone and condition of the mind of Andros. He determined to watch him closely in order to gain an opportunity to denounce him to the temple authorities, who exercised a species of baleful influence in the city. He knew that if Andros was once in

the clutches of the relentless priests of Diana he would no longer have cause to fear him as a rival. Enormous as was the wealth of the temple, Aratus knew very well that the priests would spare no pains to increase their store. He realized that should Andros once get into their clutches, neither the Chancellor nor all the civic authorities combined, nor the Roman pro-consul, would have interest or influence sufficient to save him from being fleeced of nearly all he possessed on one specious pretext or another.

One day in the middle of the month of April, just before the beginning of the Artemision festival, Lydda and Mellanides, with both Andros and Aratus were lounging on cushioned benches placed near the steps which led down to the water of the impluvium. All were watching the two swans sailing gracefully about, stirred as all nature was, by the spirit of spring. Two black slave girls, one on either side of the impluvium leaned over the low wall and alternately dropped crumbs of bread into the water. They watched, with much musical laughter, the race of the swans to and fro to secure the coveted morsels.

"A picture of life!" said Mellanides, who prided himself upon being somewhat of a philosopher. "Like those swans we rush hither and thither after life's prizes and generally succeed in obtaining merely the crumbs."

"But surely, sir," said Andros, "thou hast received more than the crumbs from a generous emperor!"

"Yes, yes, 'tis true; but I am speaking in general. Most people find that life's battle gives them only crumbs, and then they turn to the worship of the gods in their disappointment."

"Then you imply, sir, that those who have much of the goods of fortune do not need religion."

"I said not so; but they that have wealth often neglect our divinity."

"As is the case with our friend Andros here," said Aratus, insinuatingly. "It is commonly reported that he no longer attends the sacrifices of the temple, nor has he of late sent the priests any sacrificial fish."

"Is that so! Dear me! Andros, is that so?" inquired the old man excitedly. "By the favor of Diana thou hast inherited much wealth. It is ever increasing. Is it true, Andros, what he says of thee? Art thou neglecting the goddess?"

Andros cast a searching glance at the face of Lydda. He saw there some signs of alarm. Oh, if he but knew how much of their mutual difficulties she had revealed to Aratus! Turning to that individual he discerned the evidences of a malicious satisfaction on his face. He became angry.

"'Tis false! false as he who made it," he said impulsively.

"Be not mistaken, friend," said the rival diplomatically. He saw that he would have to be cautious in dealing with this friend of the family. He did not desire that his antagonism appear too soon. His plans were, at this time, not fully matured and he feared a false step. He was aware that Andros had a firm hold on the affections of the old soldier, and he did not, as yet, know how he was regarded by Lydda. "Be not mistaken. I did not make the accusation. I merely said that it was of common report. We cannot prevent the wagging of people's tongues.

"That I grant," retorted Andros, "yet we may help them to wag more viciously."

He was very angry, and, as is usually the case with angry people, said more, and in a more offensive manner, than he had intended.

"Come! come! young men," said Mellanides, "I will have no disputing here. I knew the fathers of both of you, and I regard you both in some way as sons. I will have no quarreling here. Come, embrace and be friends again."

Both young men held the old general in the greatest esteem. His word was law to them, at least in such matters as these, and, especially, when they were his guests. It was with some reluctance, owing to their natural antipathy, that they arose and clasped hands. Both sat down in silence, and Lydda, in order to relieve the tension of the situa-

tion, called for wine and some musical instruments.

That evening, at his own home, Andros thought long over this scene. In a certain way he was glad, or at least satisfied, that it had occurred. He now knew the other's disposition towards him. He felt more or less certain of the line of opposition Aratus would pursue. He knew full well the danger of becoming involved with the priests of Diana, for he had often heard of their relentless persecutions of persons destitute of sufficient influence to be able to protect themselves.

He realized his danger and resolved that he would show himself publicly in the temple of Diana within a few days. He told himself that he had not forsaken the worship of Diana. He remembered that within a few days the Artemision festival would begin and continue for four weeks. He had intended and was still resolved to avoid the ritual processions and their subsequent orgies, but had arranged that some harmless hunting in the sacred grove of Diana, attendance at the rhetorical and philosophical contests in the amphitheatre and his daily exercise at the public gymnasium and the baths should constitute his observance of the Artemision. Now he changed his plan. While fully determined not to witness or partake in any of the orgies, he would to-morrow seek out some friend and they would visit the great temple of Diana.

He was a long time making choice of a companion. At length he selected Demetrius. He knew that he was sure to find him in the temple grounds a little after the noonday meal.

CHAPTER V

A GATHERING CLOUD

The next day a few minutes after the sun had passed the meridian Andros wended his way toward the enclosure of the temple. As he expected, he saw Demetrius near the entrance gate leaning against one of a number of pillars which supported a roof extending all around the outer edge of the grounds. This roofed promenade was much frequented in wet weather and was also a shelter from the burning rays of the sun.

Demetrius was an officious, active man, who was never so pleased as when showing some one, stranger or citizen, the wonders and glories of the temple. This devout worshipper of the huntress goddess was to-day doomed to be disappointed. The evening before, during a ritual procession, he had met two Romans who had promised to come with him to see the riches of the interior of the fane. He was in the place appointed for the meeting punctually at noon, pacing up and down with impatience. He was about to return to his own home with something very like a curse upon all tardy travellers when he was accosted by Andros.

"The goddess protect thee, Demetrius.

Thou awaitest the two knights that were with thee last evening?"

"That is so, my friend, and they are dilatory. If they come not within the next few minutes I await them no longer."

"Let me inform thee, Demetrius, that they will not come. I saw them, at the third hour this morning, ride through the agora and out the eastern gate, with their attendants."

"They have gone, and I—" began Demetrius in dismay.

"The sights last night," interrupted Andros, "excited them very much. The dancing in the procession raised so much dust that it made them extremely thirsty. They indulged, so the gossips of the forum say, very freely in our strong Ephesian wines. Long after midnight the pro-consul's house rang with their noise and laughter. They disturbed everybody. Metellus was in a very angry humor this morning. He ordered them to proceed on their way as soon as they had partaken of their wine and bread."

"So! so! and all my plans—"

"Be not dismayed over thwarted plans. I, although a native of Ephesus, confess that I have never seen the full wealth of the temple. If thou art at leisure—I know thy workshop will be closed for the greater part of the month of the Artemision—I shall be proud if thou wilt show me the riches of the goddess."

"Thou an Ephesian and hast not seen her

treasures!" exclaimed Demetrius.

"I confess it."

"How old art thou?"

"Thirty years."

"Take shame to thyself then. A poor worshipper thou!"

"Time will mend my faults, if thou art kind."

The answer pleased the enthusiastic Demetrius, who replied:

"I like thy manners. I will show thee the temple. I am well known within it. Hast thou money with thee?"

"Sufficient for all the needs of both of us," replied Andros.

With all his enthusiastic and somewhat fussy devotion, Demetrius was shrewd. He extolled, in season and out of season, the greatness of Diana and the wonders of the temple, but never to the extent of loosening his own purse-strings.

"Come then," he said, "we will mount the broad steps and be in readiness when the great doors are thrown open. The high priestess and her attendants sleep long after a great procession."

The two mounted the broad flight of ten steps and sat down in the shade of one of the massive pillars of the platform.

"While we wait for these great doors to swing," said Andros, "tell me something about the mother of the gods, as we Ephesians love to call her."

This was precisely the subject most dear to the heart of Demetrius. He had no greater delight than in discovering a willing listener. Andros probably knew more of the subject than Demetrius, but he wished to detain him until the temple was open. Demetrius took himself seriously.

"It pleaseth me," he said, "that thou art one of the few who seek knowledge concerning our worship. Young man, thou art superior to most youths of thy age who think of nothing in these days but the making of love songs, or of wasting their time on the verses of Sappho."

Andros smiled. He felt that the compliment was undeserved, for he was taking but half an interest in the whole affair. It was a holiday with him. He regarded the journey he was about to make with Demetrius as one entirely of sight-seeing, and not one of devotion. He was also making the visit from a motive of policy and to dull the edge of the sarcasm which emanated from the vicious tongue of Aratus. He had, of course, often been within the temple, but he had never seen the great statue unveiled, nor had it been his good fortune to witness the display of the vast treasures of the temple. He now relied upon Demetrius to gain admission to the treasure rooms.

Demetrius settled down comfortably after the manner of professional story-tellers.

"Diana, daughter of Jupiter and Latona,

and sister of Apollo, was born in the island of Delos," he began. "She is Diana on earth, Luna in heaven, and Hecate, or Proserpine in hell. Her father, at her request, granted her perpetual virginity, bestowed on her bows and arrows, appointed her queen of the woods and forests, and assigned her sixty nymphs, called Oceaniæ, and twenty of the Asiæ as guards and attendants. Knowest thou, young man," continued Demetrius, "why Diana presides over the craft by which thou art adding to thy store of wealth—over fishermen and in general over all who use nets for the taking of game?"

Andros shook his head negatively.

"Britomartis, daughter of Jupiter and Carme, being out hunting, accidentally entangled herself in her own nets whilst a wild boar was approaching; upon which she vowed a temple to Diana if she might escape the danger. Escaping, she erected a temple to Diana Dictynna. Diana's virtue was not only inviolable, but very severe."

"If that be so," asked Andros, suddenly, "why such orgies as were witnessed in the streets last night? These very temple grounds were the scene of grossest debauchery."

Demetrius appeared nonplussed for the moment.

"Surely if the virtue of the goddess were severe," continued Andros, "her worshippers should imitate her."

Demetrius paused. He appeared very much annoyed. He frowned, and stared into the face of the younger man, but seeing that his countenance was imperturbable, and without indication of either ridicule or sarcasm, he began to make some sort of an explanation.

"You see—ah!—this is the way the worship has assumed its present form. The first worshippers went mad and killed each other. From that fact the tradition grew that the goddess craved human blood."

"So the cultus of Diana is in process of change as it were?" asked Andros, remembering Lydda's conviction that the worship would improve.

"I think so. Originally human sacrifices were offered, but later, animals dressed in men's clothes and bearing men's names were substituted. Now we sacrifice to Diana here in Ephesus the first fruits of the earth, oxen, rams and white hinds. In different parts of the world, so travellers tell us, men are still occasionally sacrificed."

"The priest of Diana Aricina must be a murderer, must he not?" asked Andros, who really knew a great deal about the history of the goddess.

Once more Demetrius flushed angrily. He could not fathom the motive of the questioner, nor could he decide whether the young man was merely sneering, or seeking information. Noticing a slight muscular

movement of the lips, and hastily deciding it was one of amusement, Demetrius became very angry.

"Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" he shouted in a very loud and angry voice, "and thou art nought but a scoffer of her divinity!"

It was the same angry voice and the same words with which, years later, this same Demetrius was to lead an infuriated mob against the Apostle Paul. When Demetrius raised his voice in anger it was heard by many within the enclosure, who came running to the steps of the temple thinking to witness the not uncommon sight of a devotee in a frenzy of madness, in which he would dance and sing the praises of the goddess until he fell to the ground in utter exhaustion. Andros did not know whether the gathering contained spies or friends of Aratus to whom they would report his conduct. He, therefore, shouted in a loud voice:

"Aye, great is Diana! Great is Diana of the Ephesians!"

He then turned to Demetrius and spoke to him in a lower tone and somewhat severely:

"Thou art but a poor teacher when thy pupil asks for information. I ask again, good sir, why must the priest of Diana Aricina be a murderer?"

The self-constituted defender of the goddess now appeared as desirous of avoiding

the attention of the crowd as was Andros. In a lowered voice he answered:

"Thy manner, O master fisherman, and the nature of thy question led me to think that thou wert not a follower of the pride of Ephesus. Perhaps thou art a worshipper in some other temple? But no; thou didst cry, 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians,' and I see the bulla thou wearest over thy tunic contains some of the Ephesian magic letters. 'Tis a safe amulet. So I will answer thee. I have, in fact, answered thee already. In this particular temple Diana is supposed to require the shedding of human blood in her sacrifices. Thou canst easily see that the hand already stained with the blood of his fellow would not shrink from human sacrifice."

Andros nodded as if satisfied, but interiorly his disgust was intensified. His repugnance to the whole system returned in greater force.

"What more canst thou tell?"

Demetrius delighted in displaying his knowledge to any one who would listen. A willing listener was a rare person for him of late years. He had told all he knew so frequently to his acquaintances that long ago they begun to shun him. The greater the difficulty he found in securing an audience the more he burned to display his knowledge. On this occasion, then, his good humor soon returned.

"Aye, aye, much more have I to tell thee if thou wilt but lend thine ears. It is wonderful how widespread is the worship of our goddess. Diana Luna is the Alilat of the Arabians. In Egypt Hecate is the Bubastes. She fled from Typhœus into Egypt and assumed the shape of a cat. She is Diana Cynthia in the island of Delos. The people of Elis call her Speculatrix. The Phœnicians took her worship into Greece. The inhabitants of Caran in Mesopotamia thought that the men who believed the moon to be a goddess would be slaves to their wives as long as they lived, but they who esteemed the deity as a god would always be their masters."

Andros laughed aloud. He assured Demetrius that he would always regard the moon as a male deity in future.

"Of Hecate," continued Demetrius, "I could tell thee many things, but—see! see! the great doors are being opened. We will go within."

CHAPTER VI

A SCORNER OF THE IDOL

Before going into the temple on his visit of policy rather than of devotion, the attention of Andros was called by Demetrius to its magnificent outer proportions.

"Is there a grander edifice in the whole world?" exclaimed the guide, aglow with national pride. "The ground on which the temple is built," he continued, happy to show his knowledge, "was originally marshy and the edifice is said to contain as much masonry below the ground as above it. Count the columns of the peristyle, Andros, and thou wilt find there are one hundred and twenty of Ionic architecture, a style of architecture invented especially for this temple."

There were good grounds for the silversmith's pride. The edifice was four hundred and twenty feet long and two hundred and twenty feet wide, and in magnificence was surpassed by no other building in the world, except, perhaps, the Temple of Jerusalem. Along the outside walls ran a row of splendid columns, and in front of each was placed a statue of heroic size. The large eastern doors were of cypress wood, the planks of which had been treasured for four generations.

Each panel was covered with plates of beaten gold, and on them were hung many votive offerings. The roof was entirely of cedar, as were the horizontal beams of the ceiling.

On entering the building Andros was almost overwhelmed at the sight of the riches displayed and with the riot of color. Thirty-six columns supported the roof. They were ornamented with metal, gilding, and stained with red, orange, crimson and blue colors. Scopas, the celebrated sculptor, is said to have carved one of the pillars. Colored stones, glass, and rich pigments were used everywhere in profusion. Some of the capitals of the pillars were sculptured with a band of human figures. Others had dedicatory inscriptions. A broad frieze, finely sculptured with lions' heads and antifixæ at intervals, broke the honeysuckle ornaments running along the summit of the cornices.

To the eye there was a feast of barbaric splendor.

At intervals along the north, east, and south walls were numerous shrines, each containing a statue of Diana. Some were of pure gold; others of fairest ivory; one was of ebony and several were of purest alabaster. The greater number were of native marble from Mt. Pion, a quarry situated close to the northern gate of the city.

One statue, on which Demetrius gazed with evident excitement, and, as Andros thought, with avaricious eyes, was of solid

silver. It represented Diana as a huntress. Her hair was flowing freely; over her shoulders was a sheepskin above a short tunic. At her side hung a quiver of arrows. In her left hand she held a bow, while her right was engaged in restraining a hind which she held by the antlers. The statue was exquisitely wrought. It attracted more attention than even the golden ones, all of which possessed less artistic excellence of workmanship.

The wealth of the interior of the building was simply untold. One would imagine that all the riches of Asia were here gathered together. Every shrine contained an abundance of votive offerings; golden cups, bows, vases, shields, the spoils of war, tripods for holding incense; and all of exquisite workmanship. Priceless rugs from Persia and rich-hued tapestries were hung on the walls or scattered about among the various shrines. Immense golden vases filled with Smyrna incense stood before many of the shrines. Worshippers paid a small coin to the attendant priest, scooped out a shell of incense and threw it on the burning coals of the tripod.

During the Artemision, vast numbers of people flocked to the temple. At all the shrines a constant stream of incense smoke was ascending, so that before Andros and Demetrius had been long in the temple the ceiling of scarlet-painted cedar wood was partially hidden. The smoke got into their

eyes and throats and affected the brain with a species of intoxication.

Evenor and Parrhasius, Appelles and Zeuxis—he who is said to have painted the portrait of a comical old woman, the expression of which was so ridiculous that he laughed himself to death—were all at different times residents of Ephesus, and priceless paintings of each were seen on the walls of the temple.

It was only during the great spring festival that the altars were so extraordinarily enriched. The immense wealth upon which the people now feasted their eyes was usually kept in the treasure-house behind the great statue of Diana, which was the principal object of interest in the immense building.

By the time that Demetrius and his companion had leisurely viewed the richness and the beauty of the various shrines, the edifice was nearly filled with worshippers.

"Come, Andros, come quickly," said Demetrius, "I have learned that the great statue is to be unveiled for a short time. I want thee to have a good view of the glory of the gods."

The two worked their way with some difficulty westward and secured a convenient position before the great purple curtain which hid the principal statue from view.

The parapetasma, or immense veil, hung from the ceiling to the ground. It was made

of rich purple silk and ornamented profusely with figures and arabesques in gold thread.

Standing before the veil, Andros was visibly excited. It may have been that the fumes of the incense had to some extent affected his brain. Hitherto, amid all the riot of riches and color, his interest had been small and his attention vagrant. Now, for some unexplained reason, standing at the very heart and holy of holies of the religion of his childhood, on the most sacred spot in the whole world for a true Ephesian, his expectations were high, although he could not have put them into words or have told the vague longings of his soul.

Perhaps at the sight of the image of the deity he would receive inspiration—a light for the mind which would forever settle all his difficulties. Here, at the very heart of the worship which embraced the greater part of the known world, he would understand all. Now, if ever, would come a solution to the problems which had puzzled him for so long a time. Henceforth his way would be clear. He scarcely knew for what he longed, yet his spirits began to rise.

Everything around him was gross and material. Much was sordid and repellent to one of his mental calibre. He was about to see the most sacred thing of his lifelong worship. Surely light and inspiration would come, and the higher and nobler part of his nature would now be satisfied. In a few minutes

there would be an end to the mental perturbations of months. His heart beat so violently that, notwithstanding the scuffling of many hundreds of feet on the stone flooring, he imagined that Demetrius must hear it.

Suddenly a loud blast from silver trumpets rang throughout the great edifice. It sent the blood tingling through the veins with expectancy. Although loud and piercing, the clarion call was very musical. It was produced by sixty performers who were stationed behind the parapetasma.

Andros expected the curtain to swing apart in the center. He was surprised to see that the great Diana was exposed to view gradually, and with the worst possible effect, by the curtain being raised from the ground. Thus the base of the statue was first exposed, then the trunk and, finally, the head.

There arose one long, wild shout of enthusiasm as the curtain rose. Many fell prostrate on the ground. Hands were thrust forward and upward in earnest appeal to the goddess. An impartial observer witnessing this scene could not have said that paganism, as it here manifested itself, was a continuous rebellion against God. As evidenced by the supplications of the multitude, it was an earnest grasping out after something.

The sensation most predominant with Andros, as he gazed on the great Diana for the first time, was that of fear mingled with horror and disappointment.

He had expected to see the embodiment in stone of some high and beautiful idea. Instead, he beheld severity and an absence of all real beauty in the image which had made Ephesus famous for many generations.

The hall was sixty feet high. The statue was ten feet from the ground, standing on a pedestal rising five feet above the platform, and was itself thirty feet in height. When unveiled it was, of course, the main feature of the temple and dominated everything. The statues around the walls in the various shrines looked small and insignificant by comparison, although many of them were of much greater intrinsic value.

The features of the great Diana were carved in lines of utmost severity. They typified the avenger rather than the dispenser of mercy. The head was surmounted with a golden tower, indicating dominion over all terrestrial objects. Around the head was a nimbus containing eight griffins, to denote the brilliancy of the glory of the goddess. The body contained a numberless quantity of breasts, to show that the goddess was the support and mother of all living creatures. Across the breasts and around the body were the twelve signs of the zodiac. Those seen in front of the figure were the Ram, the Bull, the Twins, the Crab and the Lion. Around the neck there was placed a necklace of acorns, the primeval food of man. Each arm supported two lions, denoting her power; the

hands were stretched out as if to show that she was ready to recompense all who came to her.

The lower part of the body was covered with curious beasts—sirens, sphinxes and griffins, intended to show that she was the source of all nature and the mother of all living things. The head, hands, and feet were composed of brass. The rest of the enormous statue was of alabaster.

As the parapetasma rose Andros' disillusion began. To him there was something repulsive in the barbaric statue before him. He had hoped for an inspiration. This was grossness. Instead of the sacred and generally hidden statue helping him to approach nearer to his ideal of what worship should be, it aroused all the antagonism in his nature. The rude splendor of the temple itself had offended his Grecian taste, but he had hoped to find a recompense in some inspiring, ideal work of art. The crude and unlovely severity, with its overloaded symbolism, repelled and disgusted him.

The abundance of incense that was being burned before the statue, the prolonged, shrill blasts from the silver tubæ, the fevered corybantic dances, the incessant striking of perpendicular rods with deadened hammers, the shower of rose petals from the ceiling in front of the statue, the gyrations and bowings of the priests and their monotonous chanting, together with the roar of the

increasingly excited multitude—all passed before him as if he were in a dream. He appeared to himself to be some impersonal being standing aloof as a mere witness of the ceremonies.

Demetrius was almost frenzied with devotional excitement. He turned to his companion.

"Shout, Andros, shout with the rest to our great Diana. Why art thou so silent? Shout, I say. Shout!"

Upon hearing Demetrius' voice, thick and hoarse from excitement, Andros aroused himself and came out of his semi-stupor.

"I will shout," he said, vehemently, "in honor of Diana of Ephesus, but not to honor such a fetish as that!"

He pointed a finger of scorn at the idol. It was a bold speech at such a time and in this particular place. Had he been less vexed, or less disappointed, he would not have made it.

For one minute Demetrius was silent, as if to gather the full import of the words, or as if stunned by their audacity. Then, as if suddenly realizing the enormity of the crime, he put his hands around his mouth, trumpet-fashion, and shouted:

"Ho! ho! citizens of Ephesus! A blasphemer of the divinity! Stone him! Kill him! Kill him!"

Fortunately for Andros, the imprecation was not well heard among the hundreds busy

with their own loud supplications. A certain number in the immediate neighborhood of the two men, however, had heard it but too well. Andros saw his danger. He made one desperate dash to escape. He knew it was for life and liberty.

Before he could be seized, he ran along the south side of the platform to the western doors in the rear of the great statue and reached the open air. But he was not to escape thus easily. A number of frenzied men had taken up the cry and came pouring out through the same door by which he had made his exit. He saw that now his life depended on his fleetness of foot. He knew that the River Selinus ran the length of the wall of the temple enclosure. There was no escape in that direction. He saw, with the quick perception of one in imminent danger, that he would have to run at least seven hundred feet before he could reach the eastern city gate and mix with the promiscuous throng of the city streets.

While he ran, the savage shouting increased. He reached the gate before the gatekeepers understood that they should have closed it against him. They thought he was the leader in some festive sport. Escaping from the temple enclosure, he ran through the crowded streets in a southerly direction and over the river bridge until he came to the western extremity of Mount Coressus. With the shoutings of the infuri-

"Shelter! Safety! They seek my life!" he panted. Page 61.

ated mob ringing in his ears he dashed into the thickest of the woods on the mountain slope, where he lay hidden by the dense foliage. Having somewhat regained his breath, he started again as soon as he discovered that his pursuers were dangerously near. He ran on until he came in sight of the farmhouse near the fountain, formerly owned by the inebriate Pelopidas, and now occupied, as he knew, by the strange people whom he had intended to visit at the beginning of the grape harvest of the previous year.

It was with some trepidation that he knocked at the door, for his imagination had attributed to these unknown people many mysterious qualities. In his present danger, however, he dared not hesitate.

"Shelter! safety! They seek my life!" he panted.

"Come in, and welcome in the name of God," was the immediate and unexpected reply of the one who opened the door. It was quickly closed and barred, and without a question being asked he was at once taken to an upper room.

"Bar the door, friend, on the inside, and thou art safe. The walls and door are strong. Stay thou as long as thou wilt. When thou art rested I will bring thee refreshments."

CHAPTER VII

UNDER A STRANGE ROOF

Andros lay panting on the couch in the corner of the room, half-angry and half-amused. The incident had been so sudden that at present he did not fully realize the danger he had escaped. It cannot be said that he was exhausted by the physical effort of his flight. His daily visits to the city gymnasium and his frequent attendance at the public baths rendered him athletic and capable of bearing a greater strain than the race of three miles which he had undergone. He had often run as far for the mere pleasure of exercise, and had once been crowned with oak leaves in the stadium for fleetness of foot.

When his breathing became more regular he began to ask himself how it had all come about. He scarcely remembered what he had said to Demetrius to make him so angry. He was, however, fully conscious of the effect of the words, whatever they may have been. His mind went back over the various events of the flight. How like a pack of angry Scythian wolves had appeared his pursuers, as he once and again looked back at them. He remembered how an aged peddler

of almond paste and sweet cakes carried his basket of wares upon his head, and how he had shouted to him to stand clear. The old man was either deaf or stupid, or determined to impede his flight. Andros laughed aloud at the remembrance of how he had seen the contents of the basket, when the inevitable collision came, shoot up into the air like a spray of water and settle in all directions in the dust of the street. "Poor old man," he thought, "perhaps that was his only means of livelihood. When this affair blows over I will seek him out and pay him for the loss of his wares."

The fugitive from the mob's anger was not uneasy concerning his future safety. He knew his Ephesians. They were light and frivolous of character. He had seen many a man pursued by an angry gathering for some real or fancied offense against the goddess of the city. In his younger days he had engaged in similar frolics himself. If the pursued was caught, it went hard with him in some cases. Not infrequently the rough handling during the excitement of the moment resulted in death. If he were fleet of foot enough to escape, he and the incident were soon forgotten. In a few days it was safe for the object of the rabble's momentary displeasure to appear again in public. He had seen many an event of this sort. His own predicament, therefore, gave him no particular concern, now that the immediate

danger was over. The people were always good-humored at the Dianan festival.

While revolving these and such like thoughts in his mind as he rested himself on the couch, he suddenly heard a loud knocking at the door of the house and the tramp of many feet on the portico.

"Open! open! we seek a fugitive from justice! Hast thou seen a young man, out of breath from running, pass this way?"

Andros held his breath to hear what would be the nature of the reply. He distinctly heard the answer, given in the same even tones used by the person who had shown him to the room where he was now hiding.

"Nay, friends, no stranger hath passed this house to-day."

"That is strange! He wore a pale yellow peplum and had a red Phrygian cap."

"No man with such holiday garments hath been here to-day. We have seen nought of such a one."

This was literally true, for in his flight Andros had thrown away his cap, and, finding the outer ornamental cloak, such as was worn by the better class on festival days, a detriment to his speed, he had cast that off, too.

"Thou wilt not harbor him if he cometh this way?"

"It is not probable, friend, that a criminal would be found out here in the open country. Such people, as thou oughtest know, mostly

hide where the population is densest. I recommend thee, friend, to seek for the one thou desirest in the theatre or in the forum. Dost thou not see that he would be easy of capture out in the open fields? By what name dost thou call him whom thou seekest?"

"We know not his name. All we know is that he blasphemed the goddess Diana, and that he fled from the temple."

"Art thou, then, not engaged in a bootless task?" Andros heard his protector ask in those even tones of his, in which the fugitive thought he now detected a trace of ridicule.

"People who hunt for criminals generally know the person whom they seek. Thou hast, of course, a warrant from the chancellor of the city, or from the pro-consul of the province?"

"Neither. We came as representatives of the pontifex of Diana."

"Then I advise ye, friends, to be very careful. Of course ye know that ye are out of the jurisdiction of the temple, and even out of the jurisdiction of the city authorities. To act here, beyond the city gates, thy warrant must come from the Roman pro-consul. Thou art aware that he is no worshipper of Diana, but perhaps thou dost not know so well that he is very jealous of his prerogatives."

By the silence which followed Andros was sure that his pursuers had begun to realize their false position. He was convinced of

this when, a few minutes later, he heard the tramping of departing feet. Silence again settled down upon the house.

The incident diverted his thoughts into another direction. He could but admire the adroitness with which the master of the house had parried the questions, and, without even saying what was not the truth, had not revealed the whole truth. He asked himself, time and again, what interest could the chief of the strange people—for the one who had admitted him and parried the questions appeared to be the leader among them—what interest could these people have in sheltering and protecting him. They had not even asked who he was, but had at once given him shelter and incurred no small danger in doing so. What was their motive?

In view of his own training from his earliest youth, such a course of conduct he regarded as inexplicable. He was a stranger to these people. Why should they take him in and shelter him from danger? What motive could have prompted them to put his savage pursuers off the scent? They certainly expected no reward, for he did not appear, dishevelled as he was when he arrived, to be the possessor of wealth. What, then, was the motive? This he asked himself again and again and finally gave it up as unanswerable.

Toward nightfall, just when the first star

appeared in the steel-blue sky, he heard a gentle knocking at the door of his refuge.

"Unbar thy door, friend. Fear nothing; thou art among friends. We bring thee wherewith to refresh thyself."

When Andros had removed the large oak bar from the staples and had opened the door, an elderly woman entered the room bearing in her hands a dish of fruit and some white bread of wheat. Having placed them upon the table, she took from a younger woman, who had accompanied her, a skin of wine and a dish of meat that had been recently cooked. A third person brought a dish of sweet cakes and some honey.

When she had tastily arranged the meal, she spoke to Andros in a kindly, motherly way. Andros, surprised as he was with the attention and kindness bestowed upon him, thought he detected a tinge of humor in her speech.

"Doubtless by this time thou art hungry—young people generally are. I hear thou hast been exercising thyself somewhat violently this afternoon. That is apt to create hunger. Eat thy fill, good friend, and mayest thou rest well to-night. My husband bids me say that thou canst rest in peace this night, for those who sought thee will not try to molest thee more."

There was a merry twinkle in her eyes, which were set in a good-natured, good-humored face. Andros was under the im-

pression that the last few words she spoke ended in something very like a chuckle.

"May I inquire," he said, in surprise at the simplicity and graciousness of it all, "why you treat one whom you have never seen before as if he were a brother or a son?"

"Suffice that thou art in trouble. That is reason enough."

"But you know me not. I may be a robber or a murderer."

She smiled in her kind, motherly way.

"Thou lookest neither. I know thou needest help. That is enough. We seek to do good to others as we would have them do good to us. Eat thy meal, friend, and rest thee well."

She came later to remove the remains of the meal, and once more assured him of his safety. Andros was charmed with the kindness he had received. The gentleness of manner of the elderly matron was particularly appealing to him. The kindness of him who had received and sheltered him impressed him. It was all so unlike anything he had ever known. There was no ostentation. Everything was said or done with a simplicity of manner and a naturalness which captivated the young man.

"They admit me without question and find me a place of safety," he mused. "They not only do this, but, unsolicited, they champion my cause. How clever was not the old man in getting rid of my pursuers! Why do they

do all this for a stranger? Ah, perhaps in the morning they will demand payment for their services. Payment! Did I, I wonder, lose my purse in my mad flight for my life! Let me see."

He arose from the couch and lifted his tunic and girdle from the floor, where he had thrown them. Shaking them out, he found to his dismay that his purse was missing. It had fallen from his belt during his running. He was greatly annoyed, for he sincerely desired to make a handsome payment in the morning. "Ah, well, I will send some one in the morning to my steward in the agora venalis, or to one of my servants of my house, and let him bring me a supply of money. Yes, they shall be recompensed. They do not appear to be any too well off in the goods of fortune."

He formed this judgment as he looked around the sparsely furnished room where he had taken refuge.

"I wonder what these strange people are. They are not to be feared, at all events. They must be good, for none but those possessing goodness would treat me as they have done. Perhaps they are a new class of worshippers of Diana, with a truer and better code of morals and a purer worship. Perhaps they are those for whom my soul has unconsciously been reaching out. Who can tell what the future holds! It may be that through these kind people I shall find

a purified and ennobling worship of the great goddess."

With such thoughts as these he at length fell into dreamless sleep.

CHAPTER VIII

A VISION OF PEACE

The young fugitive slept the sleep of the healthy. Toward the dawn he was aroused from his slumbers by a peculiar noise, the like of which he had never heard. Whether this sound had influenced him unconsciously before it had awakened him, he did not know, but he had dreamed that it was raining hard and that he could hear heavy rain-drops beating upon the roof. With his returning consciousness he was not sure whether the noise of his dream was not a reality.

Stretching himself upon his couch after the manner of healthy men just aroused from slumber, his brain began to clear. The strange sound continued. He could not understand it. At times, though never loud, it faintly resembled the patter of rain-drops. Then he thought it bore resemblance to the confused sounds of many voices in the distance. Ah, if the priests of Diana had taken yesterday's incident more seriously than was their wont, and had sent out a fresh company of devotees to scour the country in search of him! But the sounds came no nearer with the lapsing of many minutes. He thought that perhaps they might proceed from some

cascade in close proximity to the house. He arose and looked out of the windows on two sides of the room. The daylight was sufficiently strong for him to see that the flat nature of the ground in every direction precluded this supposition. On every side were rows upon rows of well-kept vines, just now a tender green with the early leaves of spring.

He lay down again, listening intently and much puzzled. The sound was not intense, but resembled the distant hum of bees at swarming time, although it was not continuous. There seemed to be marked and regular pauses. After a time, at intervals there was a fainter droning sound, as if some large insect were beating its wings against a window-pane. Then it was stronger, short and quick, and then occasional silences. Andros was not to learn for a long time the meaning of these sounds which were to him at present so great a mystery.

It might have been one hour after these strange noises had ceased that the master of the house knocked at his door. Andros had performed his ablutions and was noiselessly pacing up and down the rather small room, lost in deep thought. He was considering what was the best mode of proceeding for the day. Would it be wiser to go back boldly to his own house in the city, not far from the public gymnasium, or would it be

the part of prudence to remain in seclusion in this peaceful place for a few days?

"I trust thy slumbers have been refreshing?" said the one who had received him into the house the day before.

"Excellent, thanks to thine hospitality."

"The morning meal is now prepared. Wilt thou be pleased to take it with us, or shall my wife bring it to thee here?"

"I will come, and thanks," said Andros, curious to see who and how many constituted the family.

He was conducted to a large, pleasant room where the early morning meal had already been placed upon the table. It was abundant yet frugal, consisting of barley bread, figs, apples, wine, milk and honey. Andros noticed that before the seat to which he was motioned there was some bread of wheat and fish. The introduction was brief and without formality.

"I am Elymas, and thou hast already seen my wife, Joanna. These are my sons and daughters, and this is Abdiel, whom we hold in great respect."

There were two sons and two daughters. Andros afterwards learned that the young men's names were David and Gedaliah. One of the young women was called Esther and the other Hannah. He surmised that the children's ages ranged from seventeen to twenty-five. Elymas was about fifty-five years of age, and possessed a handsome,

bearded face which indicated great refinement and culture.

In the place of honor at the end of the table sat Abdiel, to whom all appeared to pay a special respect, all remaining silent whenever he began to speak. The father and mother sat at his right and left, and Andros was placed next to Elymas.

All trepidation Andros had momentarily felt as he approached the house the previous afternoon had long been obliterated by the unfeigned kindness they had shown him. He was grateful, but, nevertheless, very curious. Totally at a loss to account for the motive of giving him shelter, and of treating him, a stranger, as one of themselves, he earnestly desired to learn more about them.

Before sitting down to the meal he observed that all remained silent for the space of about one-third of a minute. Andros expected that he who occupied the place of honor would pour a libation to Jove or Bacchus, or perhaps to Diana. To his surprise, nothing of the kind occurred.

The conversation during the meal was animated and cheerful without boisterousness. Andros saw that there was a sort of familiar equality between parents and children which was entirely devoid of disrespect. All gave profound attention to the few words to which Abdiel gave utterance.

"Perhaps some sage or philosopher among

these people," thought Andros, "who, like myself, is a passing guest."

When the meal was finished Andros and Elymas repaired to the portico in front of the house. For the first time the guest felt constrained and awkward, but he did not know his host. He was remembering that he had lost his purse in the running yesterday.

"I thank thee, Elymas, for this hospitality and for the saving of my life. When I ran to thy door, if thou hadst stopped to question, or if thou hadst hesitated, without a doubt my body this morning would have been food for those vultures that are wheeling aloft yonder."

"Thou art as welcome as if thou wert my own son, good friend."

Andros bowed at the kindly sentiment. His heart warmed to the elderly man who evinced dispositions so entirely foreign to the people of his native city.

"I regret the loss of my purse. At present it prevents me from offering for thy acceptance a just recompense. I would beg one more favor."

"Anything within my power," said Elymas, "I shall be pleased to do. How can I serve thee?"

"Wilt thou permit thy son David to go into the city for me, to my house near the public gymnasium? Any citizen will point out the house of Andros. My house steward will send me gold, if thy son but present this

ring. Then I shall be able to repay thee in part for all thy kindness."

"If thou dost not require money for other purpose than this," replied Elymas, gently but firmly, "it is useless to send the boy. Let thy mind be at rest, good sir. Thou art welcome to all thou receivest. We take no recompense from those we entertain, but feel honored at their coming. Thy visit hath brought a blessing to my house."

"What! thou savedst my life, shieldest me from later danger, affordest me entertainment and wouldst not receive recompense!"

"We have been recompensed already."

"How? By whom? None of my servants have been here?"

"Nay, friend Andros, our reward comes from a source of which thou art at present ignorant. Perhaps at a later time I may tell thee more."

"Thou speakest in mysteries. Tell me thy motive for so much kindness to one to whom thou art a stranger."

"Rest content with the knowledge of our good will toward thee. Thou wouldst not understand our motives. They would appear incredible to thee. Be ye content for the present with the fact that we wish thee well."

With this Andros had to be content. He determined, however, that when occasion arose he would endeavor to learn the motive of their kindly acts to strangers and the

reason of their strange refusal of recompense.

"This is the day we rest from our labors," said the host. "Wilt thou be pleased to walk about the farm with me, or perhaps thou wouldst rather rest after thine unwonted exertions of yesterday?"

The young Ephesian, laughing at the idea of weariness, accepted the invitation. He spent the greater part of the morning among the vines and in the meadows. Returning about an hour before the noon, Elymas, with delicate tact, left him to the seclusion of his own room until the principal meal of the day was announced.

The mention of the day of rest did not particularly attract the attention of Andros. He attributed it to the Artemision festival, now in full progress, which, evidently, these simple folk observed in their own quiet way. After a time, when it grew near sundown, it dawned upon him that he had heard no mention all day either of the goddess Diana or of the processions or the games. He thought this somewhat strange, as at this season of the year there was scarcely a house in Ephesus where these subjects were not the foremost topic of conversation.

Andros found his intercourse with the family delightful. He could not help noticing that there was a freshness and buoyancy of conversation, mingled with a spritely playfulness, that charmed him. Humor and

modest hilarity were participated in by all, mingled with the exercise of parental authority on the one side and of prompt, yet dignified, submission on the part of the sons and daughters.

It was all remarkable, all strange to Andros, although very pleasant to witness. It was a phenomenon such as had never come under his observation before. He felt in some undefined way that in this household there existed a concrete example of the spirit of purity and virtue. He began almost imperceptibly to regard Joanna with that religious reverence which he had felt for his goddess in his early youth, when his view of life was more roseate and ideal than it had become in his later years. He watched the family closely and was convinced of the mutual love existing among them and of the spirit of self-sacrifice and genuine hospitality.

At his host's urgent solicitation he remained several days as guest. He had learned to love the family and looked forward to the reunion at the time of meals with no little delight, for it was a phase of life to which he had hitherto been a stranger.

These kindly people possessed a strange fascination for him. The remembrance of the remark made by the gross and red-faced Callinus in the beginning of the grape harvest of the previous year—"Are the women beautiful? If so 'twould be worth while to

visit them, and we would then learn more about them"—now grated harshly upon his nerves. He determined that, if he could prevent it, neither Callinus nor any of his companions should ever visit this peaceful household. It was with unmixed pleasure now that he realized that his position in Ephesus and his no inconsiderable wealth would enable him in the future, should the occasion ever arise, to act as a patron and protector of this family.

He was by no means certain that they would not require protection before long. Already he had seen that they were not, and made no pretension of being, worshippers of the Asiatic goddess. As far as he could see they worshipped neither god nor goddess. A flitting thought occasionally urged him to ask them to explain their worship, if they possessed any. He was not sure that the family had any set form of worship, for he had failed to discover any indication thereof in the house. In every Ephesian home there could be found a little shrine of Diana, or Hecate, or Artemis the healer, and among strangers residing in the city who were worshippers of other gods there could be found their household gods. In the house of Elymas neither shrine nor statue was to be found, nor anything whatever to indicate to which cultus the occupants adhered.

Andros remained some days a welcome guest, and when he bade the family farewell

his heart warmed towards these kindly people in a way he had never experienced before. He would have remained longer had he not become anxious concerning the welfare of Lydda. He knew Aratus would be a frequenter at the mansion in his absence, and he feared his machinations against himself.

CHAPTER IX

OUT OF THE JAWS OF DEATH

Mellanides and Lydda had heard nothing of the adventure of Andros. For three or four days they did not regard his absence as anything remarkable, yet when he remained away for a whole week they began to wonder whether some misfortune had not befallen him.

Aratus, who was a frequent visitor at the villa during the absence of Andros, was not perplexed. He had heard nothing of the visit of Andros to the temple, nor of the anger of Demetrius. The city during the festival month was overcrowded with visitors, and there were numberless feasts and festivals to occupy the attention of everybody. The mere pursuing of one man by a small company of people from the temple caused but the faintest ripple of excitement in the immense throng on the streets.

It is small wonder, then, that Aratus heard nothing of the incident. He supposed that his rival was away at the Silenusian lakes, looking after his fishing interests. It was well known that the priests of Diana held large interests in the lakes, and Aratus imag-

ined that Andros had gone north to protect his rights.

He was not displeased that his rival was absent, for Lydda and he were much together during this time. He greatly desired to be able to ingratiate himself with Lydda so as to render Andros furious and despairing when they should meet again, but the daughter of Mellanides gave him no encouragement. She was kind and affable, but made no response to his not infrequent passionate appeals for her love. Her affection for him appeared to be purely platonic. She regarded him as a lifelong acquaintance, with whom she could be on a much more free and familiar footing than with a stranger. Beyond that her thoughts did not appear to wander, much to the chagrin of Aratus, who realized that he was making but small, if any, progress.

An event occurred two days after Andros had left the house of Elymas which did not tend to increase the friendship which Aratus professed to entertain for Andros.

The mansion of Mellanides was situated in a domain which was surrounded on three sides by the windings of the River Caystrus. That part of the beautiful grounds which sloped toward the river in northerly and westerly directions was shaded by large oaks and ornamented with laurel and oleander bushes. The eastern slope was devoted to the famous rose-gardens and to the cultiva-

tion of the vine. The velvet lawns were beautifully kept and reached down to the water's edge.

Statuary in profusion, in marble from Mt. Pion, adorned the grounds, while here and there were cages of wild animals—the old general's spoils of war. Eagles from Palestine sat caged in proud captivity. Numerous peacocks strutted around the lawn, proudly displaying their gorgeous plumage or rending the air with their jealous screeches in opposition to the sweeter notes of the captive lyre-birds.

A mile west of the villa began a large stretch of forest land. This was the Grove of Diana. It was well stocked with game and during the Artemision there was much hunting there in honor of the huntress goddess. Owing to the river banks within the boundaries of Mellanides' property being patrolled by Roman guards—whom the proconsul had lent to the old soldier to guard his privacy—there was not much intrusion by strangers on the grounds. The lorica of the soldiers glittered in the sun, and the crimson comb of horsehair on the helmets was enough to warn away trespassers, although the river was alive with boats and barges of all kinds.

Lydda reclined on cushions in a beautiful boat made to represent a swan. Nubian slaves, one at either end, poled the boat out into the stream and then let it drift slowly on

the gentle current. She was attended by two or three slave girls and was dressed in her customary simple white stola, over which she had thrown a mauve silk chlamys, or traveling cloth, which was fastened at the shoulder with a clasp. The richness of the chlamys told of the rank in life of the women who wore it. The one Lydda had chosen was wrought with curious designs in gold thread, and here and there were hand-paintings of flowers and human heads.

The boat had been pushed out into the middle of the stream. Lydda enjoyed the moving panorama of brilliant colors as other boats and barges passed and repassed her. Some had awnings of pink silk, while others let crimson cloths trail in the water behind them. Some were moving masses of brilliant-hued flowers which completely hid the occupants.

Around the bend of the river there suddenly appeared a large barge magnificently decorated with festoons of roses. Four rowers sat near the gunwale on either side. Between them was a raised platform on which reclined, on cushions and low seats, a company of young people of both sexes. All were garlanded with roses, wearing them around their necks, waists, and on their heads. There was much drinking, laughing and loud singing. In imitation of the Greek galley, the prow of the vessel was adorned with a cheniscus resembling the head and

neck of an aquatic bird of enormous proportions. The cheniscus was almost covered with myrtle and wreaths of flowers. On the prow itself were painted two large eyes.

Wine flowed freely. Serving men kept the goblets full. Some of the occupants of the barge had already succumbed to the fumes and were lying either in a maudlin or drunken stupor. Others appeared to be in the highest state of hilarity. The oarsmen, who were not unsupplied with the intoxicating beverage, rowed recklessly, and even the steersman at the helm grew careless.

The other pleasure boats on the river rowed to either bank, to be out of harm's way, with all possible speed. Lydda's little vessel was merely a fanciful punt, and was, in consequence, moved very slowly by the slaves. When she saw the barge bearing down on her she was in the middle of the stream, and instantly she realized her danger. Her awkward slaves—or, indeed, the best managers of a boat with the means of propelling it that were at hand—could not get out of the way of the rapidly approaching barge with its careless and drunken crew, who were celebrating a kind of Bacchanalian water festival. Notwithstanding that for a long term of years the Bacchanalian orgies had been suppressed as public functions in the Roman Empire, and to perform them in private the permission of the Praetor Urbanus and a confirmatory vote of the Senate

had to be obtained, yet the practice in the provinces was never wholly suppressed. Rome winked at many things in her provinces, provided the annual vectigalia, or imperial tax, was forthcoming.

In less than half a minute from the time the barge had turned the bend in the river it had struck the swan-boat of Lydda. With a shriek the handmaidens flung themselves into the water. The two pole-men were struck down and fell into the water, never to rise again. Half-stunned by the concussion, Lydda was thrown into the water. She fortunately grasped one of the poles as it was floating down the stream and with its aid managed to keep her head above the water for a few minutes.

The brutal rioters in the pleasure barge did not stop to see what damage they had done. In the distance could be heard their laughter and ribald songs.

Lydda held to the pole until her strength was exhausted. Just as she was sinking down into the dark green waters, she felt a strong arm encircling her and her head gently forced against a manly shoulder.

"Thanks be to all the gods that I arrived in time to save the light of my life! my Lydda! my Lydda!"

And then she knew no more for many minutes. Andros, who had been hunting in the Grove of Diana was, by chance, near the scene of the accident. He had recognized

Lydda's little boat in the stream, and she had gaily waved her hand to him a moment before the big barge had rushed onward in its destructive course. He spurred his horse into the river as far as it could keep its footing and then he swam vigorously to the saving of the life of the one for whom he would willingly have lost his own.

CHAPTER X.

THE BITTERNESS OF ENVY

One of the Roman guards ran to the house to give tidings of the disaster. Old Mellanides, frantic with distress at the news, which, as is usual in such cases, was distorted and made to appear worse than the circumstance warranted, came running down the sloping lawn, his toga flying out far behind him.

"My daughter! my darling! my only one!" he screamed, long before he reached her dripping form in Andros' arms at the water's edge. "Oh, is she dead? my own, my sweet child! Dead! dead! Oh, ye gods, have pity on my old age! Restore her to me again—the joy of my old age!"

"She is not dead, good sir," said Andros, who still held her in his arms; "the shock of the collision and the sudden immersion have caused her to faint. She will recover in a short time."

"Give her to me! Give her to me! I will carry her to her room. Not dead! Art sure she is not dead? Thanks be to the gods!"

"Nay, sir," said Andros, knowing that it

was beyond the aged man's strength to carry her up the hill, "I will carry her to the house. Send thou a messenger ahead to have a couch prepared for her. I will carry her."

Many of the household slaves came running down to the water's edge when they heard of the accident. One was sent to the house to have everything in readiness. Others busied themselves in rescuing the slave girls, who were still in the water. Others were informed of the Nubians' disappearance and were told to dive for them and, if possible, rescue them. One body was recovered, but life was extinct. The other was never seen again.

Andros carried the unconscious form of Lydda to the villa, and gently placed her on a couch in the impluvium. He was unwontedly excited. He bent down and was about to implant an impassioned kiss on the now cold and impassive brow of the woman he loved when he became conscious of another presence in the impluvium. He straightened himself to meet the eyes of Aratus.

He was intensely annoyed at the inopportuneness of the meeting. Seeing a cynical sneer on the lips of his adversary, he could have felled him with a blow. Aratus saw danger in the flushed and frowning face, and became politic in his procedure. Without appearing hastily to get out of the reach of

danger, which he knew at that moment lay in Andros' arm, he stepped backward a couple of steps so that the other, if he intended to strike, would have to reach far over the recumbent girl to reach him. This he knew Andros would not do.

"Thou art a worthy leech, and wouldst take thy payment quickly."

"Thou art Hecate's hound, and had I thee alone, and in different circumstances, I would show thee what I think of thee."

"A very hero, who are impatient lest thy services go unrewarded," retorted Aratus, who continued to get farther away as he spoke.

At that moment Mellanides ran into the impluvium from the steward's office with a silver plate on which was burning some aromatic gum, the smoke of which was very pungent. He had heard the last words of Aratus.

"What! what! you two boys quarreling again! This is not the time for disagreements. Here, Aratus, get that feather fan and waft the smoke towards my daughter's face."

Aratus excused himself, saying that he was about to see the pro-consul to have the revellers of the barge arrested for murder in case Lydda did not recover.

"Farewell, sir. I haste to the Roman garrison. Farewell, Andros. Be sure thou

gettest thy pay for thy medical services. I trust thee for that."

"Thou dog of Cerberus!" began Andros, now furiously angry, but he was checked by the pathetic look on old Mellanides' face.

"Leave thy quarrel for the time, my friend, and do thou assist me to restore my daughter."

As the young man could not refuse the appeal, he therefore turned his back on his rival, not, however, before he had said in a low but clear tone, distinctly heard by Aratus but not caught by the old warrior.

"Thy life shall be forfeit for this. Look ye to it. I warn thee."

Aratus was some little distance away by this time, and so thought it safe to snap his fingers at Andros. He did this with an amount of bravado, for he was far from being courageous. He was a coward at heart, and really feared his adversary. He knew that Andros was aware that the attention he was paying to Lydda was not the effect of real love for her, nor entirely disinterested. The fact was that he was enormously in debt. He knew that the daughter of Mellanides would inherit immense wealth of gold and rich household treasures, as well as house and lands. As long as he thought there was an equal chance with Andros to win the heiress' hand, he could manage by profuse promises of future gratuities to the Ephesian Jews

to stand off these money lenders. He was not, therefore, so much in terror of the strong arm of Andros—although he realized that it would be prudent to keep away from that—as he was of a decided preference being shown for him by Lydda, for in some imperceptible way his creditors learned almost daily of the prospects and progress of his suit.

By the law of probabilities and by nice calculation the money lenders of Ephesus had allotted but a short time more—only a few months at most—as the limit under ordinary circumstances of Mellanides' life. They knew that then, or at least after a brief season of mourning, Lydda would marry, and they watched the fluctuating chances of Aratus as only those can to whom domestic happenings mean loss or gain.

Aratus was aware that the events of the day would be speedily conveyed to the ears of his Jewish creditors. He was often puzzled at their accurate knowledge of his domestic affairs. He surmised that it was some slave who was liberally bribed to give the information, but he had never succeeded in discovering which slave it was. He was sure that so important an event as the accident would not go untold, and he was equally certain that the informer would tell of his quarrel with Andros, and he was proportionately vexed and anxious.

Lydda was not long in recovering from her swoon. The pungent odor of the incense smoke greatly assisted in restoring her to consciousness, and in less than two hours, to the intense joy of Mellanides, she appeared to be as well as she had ever been.

CHAPTER XI

GAINING GROUND

"You will remain our guest for a few days?" asked Mellanides of Andros at the meal on the evening of the accident. "I am considerably shaken by the event, and do not know what evil effects will follow. I want, just now, a strong arm to lean upon."

Notwithstanding there was a slight touch of pathos in the old warrior's appeal—coming from one who had all his life been so self-sufficient—Andros' pulse quickened at the thought of being for some time near the object of his love. He restrained himself so as not to appear to accept too eagerly.

"I am getting old," continued Mellanides, "and if anything should happen to me I want my daughter to be protected. When I am gone, as my friends have often warned me, there is a probability that the priestesses will set up some sort of claim to my property. You remember when old Theon died how they succeeded in securing his estate, leaving his children in want. While I live I carry my amulet against all their spells and incantations, and so I am safe. When I am gone it may be otherwise with Lydda. Will you

look after my daughter's interests? When I die I leave this to you."

He held up a Gorgon's head with round chaps and wide mouth, with the tongue drawn out. It was emblematic of the full moon. Mellanides regarded it as a preservative against all evils, and always wore it. It was of blackened silver and was attached to a light chain of the same material which he wore around his neck.

Although Andros did not place much reliance, if any, in the charm, he promised to accept and wear it. He regarded as much more important that Mellanides should have selected him as a kind of guardian of his daughter. This he looked upon as a serious trust, and he made a secret vow that he would be faithful to the charge even at the cost of his life.

"Thou hearest, O Lydda, the responsibility thy father places upon me?"

"Hast thou not earned this by right of rescuing me from death?"

She lifted her long graceful arm from the cushion and reached towards him, as if she would once more shake his hand in gratitude for his heroic action. Andros seized the tapering fingers and ardently pressed them to his lips.

As he looked into her eyes he thought that there never was a more beautiful maiden born. She was tall. Her head had the poise of Juno. Her features conformed to the

truest Grecian type, as shown in a broad but not high forehead and straight nose, the delicately thin dilating nostrils of which appeared to quiver with every passing emotion. Her red lips were neither small nor large. Full and even teeth enhanced a charm which the round curves of cheek and neck made remarkable even among a city of beautiful women. A classic Greek coil of dark rich brown hair crowned her head, leaving the small pearl-pink ears uncovered. A dash of color on a complexion of clear creamy softness rendered her face extremely beautiful. Her large clear eyes could quickly pierce through deceit, or soften with compassion. She had schooled herself for years to a studied reserve as a safeguard in her somewhat difficult and isolated position as mistress of her father's household, and yet her pose always exhibited an unstudied grace.

Long the two sat in the gloaming and gathering darkness in the impluvium. The stars appeared, one by one, in the steel-blue vault above, and still they talked on. Andros told her of his visit to the temple with Demetrius and of his impressions and disappointments. He then related to her his experience and flight for life. During the recital he saw that Lydda was visibly frightened. She trembled for his safety as the story proceeded.

"And how didst thou escape?" she asked, breathlessly.

"I ran through the woods at the west end of Mount Coressus—thou knowest the place—and came to the house of Pelopidas. There I was received and sheltered until the storm blew over."

"I thought Pelopidas had lost his house," said Lydda, "being too ardent a client of Bacchus. I am sure it was so reported."

"Yes. He is no longer there, but the house is occupied by a good and simple family whose kindness and genial ways have quite won my heart. They are different from us Ephesians. They sheltered me and threw my pursuers off the scent, declared they were honored in receiving me as their guest, and, what is strangest of all, refused all compensation, hinting that in some mysterious way they had already been recompensed. The strangest part is that with all their friendliness and hospitality they are blasphemers, for they worship none of the gods—neither Venus, nor Jupiter, nor Diana, nor the emperor—but as for the last," said Andros, laughing, "I blame them not, for none but a fool would ever acknowledge him as a god!"

"Hush! let not my father hear thee. 'Tis strange," she mused—"this thy experience. I, too, have had a similar one."

"Thou! thou, Lydda! Art thou becoming an especial charge of the gods? Art thou losing thy mind? Thou! how couldst thou arouse the anger of Demetrius and have to flee before an angry mob for thy life!"

Lydda laughed musically.

"Thou mistakest. I mean that I have had a similar experience to thine in meeting a family to whom my heart goes out. Dost thou remember our conversation concerning the worship of Diana some time ago? Thou rememberest that thou wert disgusted with the orgies that accompanied her festivals, and with the degraded men and women who serve at her altars and with the lowest types of humanity who minister at the sanctuary."

"Well I remember! The thought has been with me for a long time, and it was intensified when I saw the great statue unveiled for the first time and looked upon a piece of crude, barbaric splendor rather than the embodiment of an ideal, which I had expected to find."

"Thou once didst tell me it was thy intention to visit the temple. Since that time I have not seen thee. So thou wert disgusted? I am not surprised, and I also begin to doubt my former assertion that the worship of the goddess will improve and elevate itself. How brutal was not the running down of my little boat this afternoon, which might have cost me my life but for thy assistance, and did cost the lives of two of our slaves. Let me thank thee again, Andros."

All this was very pleasant to Andros, but he was desirous of hearing more of the strange people with whom Lydda had come in contact.

"Tell me of the experience thou sayest was similar to mine."

"A few days ago I had crossed the Caystrus with the intention of wandering in the woods and gathering spring flowers. I told my slaves—the two poor men who were drowned to-day—to wait for me on the northern bank of the river. I wandered far into the woods, enjoying the singing of the birds and the flowers. My slave girls crowned me with wreaths of daffodils and called me their queen. It amused them and I permitted it. We remained longer in the woods than I knew. Perceiving that the sun was on the point of dropping into the Icarian Sea, I arose hastily, intending to return to the ferry at once. In doing so I stepped upon a rolling stone and sprained my ankle."

"Ah! wert thou wounded badly?" inquired the lover.

"It was nothing serious. My slave girls set up a wailing, thinking, perhaps, that I would hold them responsible for the accident and punish them later. Their cries attracted the attention of some people living near by. Three women came running through the forest to see what had happened. The stoutest of the three lifted me in her arms and carried me with ease to their house, about three hundred paces away.

"The door at once opened, and an elderly looking woman said, 'Welcome in the name of God' and I was carried in."

"Strange," remarked Andros, "those were the same words with which the people in the house of Pelopidas welcomed me."

"What god, think you, meant they? Was it Jove, or Hercules, or that quasi-divinity, our emperor?"

"I know not. Didst see any statues of their divinities?"

"There were none. Nevertheless, they treated me most kindly. They applied hot and cold water to my foot and rubbed the wounded ankle, and were most kind. On leaving they insisted that I should use their vehicle. Rough as it was I could not refuse, and, indeed, it was better than to have to walk."

"They are a kindly people," said Andros, "and I thank them. They are as good as Elymas and his family. I must see them."

"The strangest thing about it all," continued Lydda, "is that when I offered them some gold from my purse, they refused. Didst thou ever find our own people refusing gold, Andros?"

"Nay; but, if thou remember, I told thee that those who sheltered me in my danger also refused payment for their services."

"Thou must come with me, and we will visit them together."

"And thou also must come some day to see Elymas and his family."

CHAPTER XII

ARACHNE'S CAVE

When Aratus left Andros in anger he hastened directly south, past many fine villas, until he came to the suburbs of the city, and then to the city wall. During his walk he had been thinking deeply and had devised a plan by which he thought he could be avenged on Andros for the threats he had used against him. Passing through the northern gate, he wound his way through numerous streets on the east of the city port until he came, near nightfall, to a tavern situated just within the city boundary.

The wine-shop was one of the lowest of its class in Ephesus. Here congregated the ruffianly characters from almost every nation under the sun. It was a rendezvous for criminals whose misdeeds had not yet been discovered, and of those who knew, sooner or later, they would be taken and executed unless they succeeded in gaining sanctuary. Sailors from Alexandria and Athens, from Syracuse and Paphos—the worst of their kind—were there. Thieves and murderers of Ephesus made this tavern their meeting-place.

Aratus knew of its evil repute. Stepping

from the street down four steps into the drinking cellar, he called for wine. He was soon surrounded by an evil brood. Some felt their long knives, as if to do away with him. More than one gazed, with itching fingers, at the little golden bulla he wore on his breast, suspended by a thin golden chain, and which was only partially hidden in the folds of his toga. The visitor was fully aware of the dangerous character of the men into whose company he had intruded himself. He was also aware that should he show any indication of fear for his own safety that very safety would be greatly jeopardized. Seating himself at a table, but with the precaution of putting his back to the wall, he called lustily:

"Ho! mine host, bring wine for these brave men. And, as thou valuest thine head and thy reputation, let it be strong, as becometh brave men to drink."

There was a general move of satisfaction among the motley company. They gathered around him in apparent good will. It was seldom a stranger of the better class came to this tavern, and less seldom was one found willing to spend his gold for them.

"Bring a large ampulla. I and these brave fellows are thirsty. Aye, brave," he said, turning to the nearest of them, "brave men! Ye are such as I like to have for comrades in a dangerous game."

"What is it, master? What is it?"

"Drink first, drink all," said Aratus, who appeared at ease, but was really hiding his own fears under a cloak of braggadocio and outward freedom of manner which was merely assumed. He was, in reality, much afraid of the knives and poniards of these rough men. He was glad when the tavern-keeper passed around brimming goblets of rich Pramnium wine which quickly produced intoxication.

"Brave men," said Aratus, "there is not one here who would hesitate to slit a man's throat from ear to ear?"

There was a murmur of general assent.

"'Tis no new trade among ye, I'll warrant me. Drink, good fellows, for I have work for some of ye tonight."

While the sailors and other frequenters of the tavern were drinking freely from the large jar of wine, which had been placed on the table so that all could dip out a supply as often as they desired, Aratus began to study the men before him. He wanted the assistance of two only, and he knew that before long most of them would be in a drunken stupor or indulging in excessive hilarity, according to the natural bent of character of each. Before the wine fumes began to affect the brain he picked out two sailors who, he thought, would suit his purpose. He took them aside to another table and began to talk to them in a low tone, having slipped a gold piece into the hand of each.

One wore the red woolen cap of a Cyrenian, which was pulled down over his ears. A red sash held in place a dark, rough sailor's blouse which was ornamented with two vicious looking knives. The face was covered almost to the eyes with coarse black hair which gave him a ferocious appearance. His companion was fairer and did not present so desperate an appearance. His sunburned features were regular, and even the hard-faring life of the sea had not completely destroyed all traces of refinement in him.

"Are ye willing, friends," said Aratus, "to go with me to-night on a perilous journey?"

"How many of us dost thou require?" asked the fairer of the two.

"But you two."

"Didst thou not lead all here to believe there was work for them?"

"I did not say I wanted them all. Few of them will be of use in an hour. I will order another ampulla of wine. See how that fellow's arm goes down into the crock to fill his horn. It must be nearly empty. They will all be asleep before long."

"Be not so sure. These seafaring men can drink more deeply than thou thinkest."

"Well, we will tell them that we go to prepare work for them. Come."

Aratus led the two outside into the cool, fresh night air, and there told them that he wished them to accompany him to the cave of Arachne.

"Dost thou not fear," asked the Cyrenian, "to disturb this spider's web—this Hecate's handmaiden? Knowest thou not that she can raise storms at sea, kill infants at the breast with a look, blast our crops and blight our vines at her will, if she be angered?"

"I care not if she be the goddess of hell herself providing she do my bidding," said Aratus, more bravely than he felt.

"But, stranger, 'tis said she hath a Cappadocian bloodhound that can pull down the largest man with ease."

"Art thou, Libyan, afraid of a dog when thou hast slain lions in thine own desert?"

"No. I am not afraid of anything I can see, but the witch hath powers over nature, and demons do her will."

Aratus laughed.

"I have a talisman by which she will do my will. 'Tis bright and yellow and heavy," and as he spoke he dexterously slipped another gold piece into the hands of the Cyrenian, who answered:

"As thou wilt. We will protect thee from the hound. Thou must not require us to enter Arachne's cave."

The eloquence of gold was successful. The two men agreed to accompany Aratus to the mouth of the cave. The night was very dark. The journey was a long one out on the road to Magnesia. More than once the three passed small bands of roving depredators, and Aratus was glad that he had se-

cured the company of the two stalwart and fearless sailors, who were, however, brave only against known dangers, but the veriest children in their terror of the unknown or supposed preternatural powers.

When they arrived at the mouth of the cave they were ready to attack the great bloodhound should it appear, but no persuasion could induce the sailors to enter the cave or face the witch. Aratus had, therefore, to enter alone, a task which he by no means relished. Prompted by desire to injure another, he made bold to advance to the entrance of the cave, the interior of which was partly lit up by the deep red glow of burning coals on a low brazier. The earthen floor was strewn with skulls, the eye-sockets of which seemed alive as the small flame of the brazier rose and fell. Dead newts, and frogs, and lizards were fastened to the walls of the cave. Suspended from the roof by a string, hung head downward, a large snake which with rude taxidermist skill had been stuffed in the form of a spiral. The slightest breeze set the snake in motion, making it appear as if alive. A large blinking owl sat solemnly on a peg driven into a crevice in the rock.

The most fearsome creature was the immense Cappadocian hound, which at the sound of footsteps approaching sat up on his haunches. His head was enormous, his eyes blood-red, his lips pendant and running

saliva. An unlit Grecian earthen lamp hung from the roof of the cave by an iron chain.

A low rumbling growl from the dog aroused the old woman from her dozing or revery as she sat with the palms of her hands toward the blazing coals.

Horrible or dangerous as the huge animal was felt to be, the appearance of the witch was calculated to inspire both fear and repugnance. She was extremely dirty, but through the grime on her face could be seen an ashen color as of the dead. Her eyes, sunk far back into her head, burned with a veiled glow of malice. There was not a grain of superfluous flesh on her face, which bore the resemblance to a skeleton, so tightly was the grey skin drawn over the bones. The lips were so thin that they appeared to be merely parchment drawn over the teeth, which, however, were large and well preserved. This one feature, which redeemed the face from absolute squalor and ugliness, had the effect of adding to the ghastliness of her appearance. Long, bony fingers, thick at the joints, seemed to be made for strangling. She was tall, and her soiled palla was in rags.

Aratus stood at the opening of the cave, trembling with fear of the great mastiff and with fright at the sight of Arachne, who, well aware of his presence, crouched motionless over the red embers. He stood for some

minutes speechless, unable to break the spell which the weird scene had cast over him.

"Who cometh to disturb my peace? Who dares enter the cave of Arachne? Know ye that those who consult me in my cave are forever at my bidding?"

The young Ephesian was startled at the tone of the woman's voice. It was as strong and deep-chested as a man's, and the wonder was that a being so old and frail looking could produce such a volume of sound. The voice, unusual as it was, coming from a woman, had the effect of breaking the spell under which the visitor had been cast.

"Call off thy dog, mother; I have business with thee."

"Down, beast," she said, and lightly waved her hand downward. The dog instantly obeyed. He crouched down, but kept his red eyes glaring at the intruder. Aratus felt relieved, yet he noticed that the great beast had advanced himself, stealthily and as if afraid of his mistress, several inches in his direction.

The woman pointed to a rock shelf answering the purpose of a seat. From her position she could see the face of her visitor, while her own was partially hidden in shadow. Aratus sat down, but a moment later sprang up in horror. In front of him he saw for the first time, in a niche some six feet from the ground, a black oak statue of Hecate the Terrible. Around her head was

twined a wreath of snakes and in her hands she held bunches of vipers, which in the flickering firelight writhed and tried to escape. Others were crawling around the foot of the statue and some were sliding down the walls of the cave. Arachne saw the effect they produced on the mind of Aratus.

"Ha! ha! ha! coward! fool!" she croaked. "Get thee gone! Why comest thou here if thou art afraid of Hecate's symbols? Fool! Know ye not they are all dead?—dead as I shall be ere many moons. Ha! ha! Thou brave one! Thou art brave, indeed!"

Aratus looked closer and felt confused and ashamed when he discovered that the vipers, like the coiling snake overhead, were the product of the taxidermist's skill. The old woman seemed viciously to enjoy his discomfiture. The horror which the incongruous setting of her cave caused in her few visitors seemed to be her one species of amusement. When she had finished her raucous laughter and had ceased beating her palms on her knees, she once more lapsed into sullen silence. Aratus waited for a long time, and finally summoned courage to address her again.

"I come for a charm."

"Which will kill thy rival?" she interrupted him.

He was startled. How did she know of his intention?

"Then go thy way. Dost think that

Arachne will commit murder for thy gold? What are thy loves and thy heartaches to her? Go!"

"But listen, Arachne. All Ephesus knows of thy skill. I ask not a charm that will lose for him his life, but one that will merely get him out of my path. I have gold to offer thee."

He displayed several pieces in his netted purse, the sight of which made the old woman's eyes glisten more balefully and her bony fingers twitch. Without speaking she stretched forth her hand. He placed two gold pieces in it. Her fingers immediately closed over the golden treasure.

"Thou dost not want his life?"

"No."

"But if an overdose of the potion that I shall give thee should accidentally get into his wine, thou wouldst not grieve overmuch?"

There was an insinuating leer on her grey face which even to Aratus was repulsive.

"I tell thee, I do not want to take his life."

"Fool! thou knowest thou dost lie!"

She almost shrieked this last sentence, and Aratus was conscious that she was speaking the truth. She limped back to the farthest recess of the cave and took from a small shelf a box which appeared to contain a preparation of powdered herbs. Putting some of this into a small vial, she filled it with liquid resembling water, but which sent forth a

pungent odor. In a few minutes she drained this off into another vial and sealed it.

"Three drops of this in his wine—three drops, remember—will madden the brain to frenzy and will cause a sickness from which it will take many weeks to recover. Mind thou useth no more than three drops," she said significantly.

Aratus understood perfectly. He knew that he possessed a powerful potion against his rival, but he had no intention whatever, at this time, of using more than Arachne had prescribed.

When he left the cave he called loudly for his two seafaring companions. There was no response. They had deserted him, either through fear of the dread Arachne's presence or of the great bloodhound. Aratus was compelled to travel back along the Magnesia road into the city amid perils more real than those of Arachne's cave, for this highway had the reputation of being more infested with robbers than any of the numerous ways of travel leading to Ephesus. Aratus was not much heartened for his solitary homeward journey when, on looking back for a last glance at the witch's cave, he saw Arachne at the entrance with a lamp held before her ghastly face. He was startled at her parting words:

"Fool! thou wilt loathe her yet. Thou wilt loathe her yet."

CHAPTER XIII

ISPHAR OF SALAMIS

During his stay at the villa, at the request of Mellinades, Andros often asked himself whether Lydda had heard his impassioned words as she was sinking into the water. He could not decide whether she had lost consciousness by the time he arrived.

Whether she had done so or not, she gave no indication, preserving the same exterior platonic affection for him which she had shown since they were children together. He knew that she was grateful to him for the rescue, yet he was quick to see the difference between gratitude and even incipient love.

He was, nevertheless, during the time he remained with her, daily growing more confident of himself, and of ultimately securing her love. He took new heart, feeling that he must ultimately be successful, yet prudently refraining from pressing his suit at present, believing the time was not propitious, or such a course quite honorable in view of recent events. He was willing to wait, reasoning, and perhaps correctly, that such strong love as his must in time generate in her a reciprocal affection. With these

hopeful thoughts he returned to his own house.

The Artemision was now at the height of its progress. The streets, night and day, were noisy with the revellers. His own house was within five minutes' walk of the great gymnasium and the public buildings. In the quiet of his own rooms he could hear the roar and the shoutings and songs of the crowds in the streets.

The young Ephesian was caught by the gaiety and spirit of the holiday time, for the change from the dignified repose of Lydda's home to the noise and hilarity of the city, with its merrymaking, influenced him strongly. He still disapproved of the sensual nature of the processions, yet the habit of a lifetime was not easily overcome. The calm and quiet of the house of Elymas had deeply impressed him, and more than once he had thought that there he would find that for which his soul longed; nevertheless, it was difficult to abandon the practices and customs with which he had been familiar from his earliest youth. All his life the Artemision had been the great event of the year for him, as it was with all the Ephesians. Its attractions just now appeared to him more than ever alluring.

He put aside for the nonce the craving for the higher ideals and a purer worship, which his reason told him was the only thing that would satisfy his intellect, and determined,

if not to take part in the ritual procession that night, at least to be a witness of it—perhaps for the last time, he told himself. He no sooner determined than he began to hesitate. He knew that Lydda had not attended any of the temple services or witnessed the ritual processions for several years. Both had agreed that they were, at least, not elevating. In his prolonged visit at her house they had discussed the question again and again, and now, although there seemed to be in him a hunger for the gay sights and the wild and boisterous music of the dancers, he felt that should he once more mix with the throng he would in some way be a traitor to himself and to her whom he loved. His better part, his higher self, told him to refrain, while the inferior nature in him called loudly for distraction and excitement. The lower call seemed the more exacting at the present moment, owing, perhaps, to the reaction from that higher plane on which he always lived when in company with Lydda.

Chance settled the question for him in an unexpected way. Early in the afternoon his chief slave drew aside the arras of the door of his room and announced:

"Good master, Isphar of Salamis in Cyprus desires speech with thee."

Isphar was a rich merchant with whom Andros had large and lucrative dealings. He told the slave to bid him enter.

The merchant of Cyprus was a Persian

by birth, and had retained the costume of his own country. As he entered the room Andros saw a man over six feet in height, with jet black beard and hair and a very handsome face. His long, straight features were browned with the sun, but beneath the tan was a rich red flush on each cheek. His teeth were large and very white, and showed in strong contrast beneath his black mustache. He wore the Persian dress of the better class. On his head was the Phrygian cap which, contrary to the Lydian custom, pointed backward. His tunic of plum-color silk had long, wide sleeves and was held in place by a broad white belt, in which was a knitted silk money purse which partially hid a rather broad dagger case embossed with pieces of gold and a few small gems. Beneath the tunic was a short green skirt. He wore plum-color stockings and red shoes slashed with yellow bands.

With him entered his umbrella bearer, who was dressed in a white, flowing tunic, with a yellow cap and shoes of the same color. The umbrella was made of strips of bamboo and yellow paper.

"Welcome, Isphar. Welcome to the city of Diana. I am honored by thy visit. My house is thine."

"May thy great Diana preserve thee! I thank thee for thy hospitality. I come to pay thee the money I owe thee for the last consignment of Pramnium wine, and ver-

milion lead. Thy shipmaster could have brought thee thy gold, but from my youth I have had a desire to witness the Ephesian Artemision feastings. Contrary winds delayed us sailing these many days. I trust I am not too late to see some of the festivities."

"Come with me, good sir, to the atrium, and we will soon settle the business between us. That being over, thou art my guest until thou desirest to return. Ho! Agis," he called to one of his slaves, "take the umbrella bearer with thee to thy quarters and see thou use him well."

On the day of the arrival of Isphar the city of Ephesus was quivering with excitement. It wanted but one week to the close of the Artemision, and the populace seemed to be intensifying their pleasure as the festival season drew to a close.

All day long and far into the night might be heard the piercing shrillness of the flutes used in the processions of the Megabyses, or priests, or the harsh jangling of the crembala, those shallow metal cups, as they were struck together after the manner of cymbals. The rattle of the crotals, or wooden castanets, sounded everywhere, resembling in the distance the noise of heavy drops of rain falling on an iron roof. Songs and shouts and laughter were heard everywhere. Already that day Isphar had caught sight of one of the ritual processions which went from the temple enclosure out into the grove

of Diana, past the Port Panormus, or Sacred Port. This gaudy affair was like a rehearsal of what was to come in the evening after the sun had gone down.

Upon landing, Isphar was dazed and bewildered by the number and hurry and noise of the citizens on the streets. Representatives of almost every known nation mingled with the inhabitants and formed a motley gathering of ever-changing color. All were in high good spirits. Laughter and banter passed freely among strangers and visitors as among acquaintances. From the noise and confusion of it all the traveller from Cyprus was glad to get to the house of Andros.

After a sumptuous meal, when the sun had set in a bath of fire in the Icarian sea, and when the spring gloaming was rapidly turning to darkness, Andros and his guest wended their way to the northeastern gate which pierced the thick walls enclosing the grounds of the great temple. Isphar was fain to admit that the wonderful capital of the pro-consular province of Lydia bid fair to rival the glories of Rome, which he had once visited in his youth. The visitor soon realized that the religious life of the city was engrossed in the cultus of Diana. Its influence was ecumenical so far as the large majority of the inhabitants were concerned, swaying and influencing their lives, in some particulars even down to minutest details.

The two friends had started out early, Andros being desirous of showing his customer all that was worth viewing. By means of a goodly bribe, they had been taken by one of the eunuch priests to the living-rooms over the temple and were given a brief glance at the "Essen," or chief priestess of the Melissæ, or virgin priestesses, who attended to the services of the mother of the gods. The two sightseers had not been much impressed, for when the venal priest had drawn aside the curtain of the entrance for an instant, they saw her lying listlessly on a divan with a garland of faded red and white water-lilies on her head, her face gaudily painted, and wearing a chlamys of white wool which was much in need of washing. The Essen looked weary with the weariness of death. The dinginess of her costume helped to produce this impression.

Andros watched with interest the effect this private view at close quarters of her who would presently ride abroad through the city in a magnificent car would have on Isphar. He was not particularly surprised to discover that his friend from Salamis was inclined to be a little satirical, and even sceptical as to the genuineness of the forthcoming religious procession as an act of worship to Diana.

Both men were broad-shouldered and muscular, and when in the throng outside the temple Isphar stood half a head above those surrounding them. Although they

were on the peaceful mission of sightseeing, Andros had warned the Cyprian of the fickle temper of the sometimes reckless gatherings on the streets at the time of the Artemision. He had provided his guest with a short, sharp Damascus sword, and he wore one himself. The two walked about among the ever-increasing crowds until they came to the eastern gate of the temple grounds.

"Canst tell me, stranger," said Isphar to one of the many who were crowding up to the gate, "which way the procession wends to-night?"

"Stranger!" replied the one addressed, "stranger! thou art the stranger! I am at home in this great city. Be careful how thou speakest. Thou art a Persian by thy dress, but even a fire-worshipper is not allowed too free a speech during our Artemision."

The burly visitor of Cyprus was amused. He could, with ease, take the irate speaker and throw him over the heads of the now densely packed throng gathered at the gate.

"By Hercules! if thou art not civil—" began Isphar, as he tried in the throng to put his hand on his sword.

He received a warning pull of his sleeve from Andros, who whispered in his ear:

"Be careful of thy speech, Isphar; these people are intoxicated with pride of their goddess just now. Remember thy dress proclaims thee a stranger."

"Thou art correct, I will be guarded."

Turning to the citizen, he said:

"Friend, take no offense. I am the stranger here, 'tis true. I seek but information."

The angry man appeared mollified.

"I take no offense if thou intended none and gladly tell thee what I know. I have learned but now from one of the priests that almost at once the procession starts and comes through this gate. Then it will go through the arches on the north side of the city port, and then on through the suburbs to the northern gate. It will wend its way around the stadium, where the last of the horse-races will take place to-morrow, then go through the agora civilis and by the great gymnasium. Passing through the other agora, it will come back to the temple by way of the colonnade on the south of the city port. When the procession leaves the great agora, fires are to be lighted at numberless points on the city side of Mount Coressus. The sight will be worth thy viewing. Great is Diana! Thou art very fortunate, O Persian, to see the last great procession of the year."

"We thank thee for the information," said Isphar. "Can we find a better vantage ground than this?"

"Come ye both with me," said the erstwhile angry citizen, and he began to push his way through the dense gathering. "I am well known here, and as thou desirest to

tell the glories of our city when thou returnest to thine own country, I can serve thee. Seest thou that base of the porphyry column yonder? It is yet unoccupied. It will cost thee some silver, but doubtless ye both will gladly pay for the privilege, on such a night as this, of being high above the heads of the people."

When the three reached the unoccupied square base of the pillar, Andros put three silver coins in the outstretched hand of a minor functionary of the temple, who immediately placed a short ladder in such a position that Andros, Isphar and their guide could without difficulty take their positions on the upper flat surface of the block.

From their elevated position they could observe nearly the whole enclosed area belonging to the temple. For the space of three hundred feet in every direction could now be seen a densely packed sea of heads. At their first view of the throng, all faces were turned towards the temple door, which had just been thrown open. All were straining their eyes to catch a glimpse of the head of the procession emerge from the temple, but for the present no one appeared. During the delay Andros and his friend had leisure to study the immense throng.

CHAPTER XIV

THE ARTEMISION

Many Roman visitors, distinguishable by the whiteness of their togas, were present to witness the last of the great processions of the season. In marked contrast to these were Sarmatian soldiers in tight-fitting scale armor. Others wore buff leather tunics with green skirts. Everywhere could be seen the Phrygian cap which was the national headdress of all the Asian provinces—Mysia, Lydia, Caria, as well as Phrygia itself. The common costume of the Lydians was a yellow cap and a bright yellow tunic reaching to the knee, over which was worn on festival days a scarlet cloak. Dacians were there, naked from the waist up, except for a brown cloak of coarse cloth. Many Persians of rank had gained entrance to the enclosure. The warriors wore a towered cylindrical head covering, with loose garments of white clasped by a golden girdle. Here and there could be seen the silver-scaled tight tunic which shone and glittered in the light of the torches. Many a travelling Greek in the throng wore the brown toga virilis. A Roman officer's high brass helmet, with its red comb of horsehair, was

a conspicuous object as its wearer moved among the throng. The Greek philosopher was distinguished by his brown cloak and dull blue tunic beneath.

On these occasions of festivity the women, of whom there were a large number present in the enclosure, and also the men of Ephesus, wore ornamented tunics of different colors, light-grey, pink, crimson, blue, white and yellow, the latter, however, being the predominant color. Here and there could be seen the Ephesian nobleman with the liberty cap ornamented with golden knops and ear-lappets. The highly embroidered tunic and close-fitting trousers in red and white lozenge-shape design, caused the wearers to receive a certain amount of deference from the people.

In contrast with the uncouth and untrimmed beards of the Parthians were the Greeks, who took extreme care of their beards, dressing and curling them with heated irons, so that in many cases they resembled the regularity of a honeycomb. Country people, sightseeing, wore the skins of animals across the left shoulder, leaving the right arm bare. In a few cases could be distinguished the dull gaberdine of the Jew, who, forgetful of his religion, or impelled by an overmastering curiosity, mixed with a people devoted to the worship of a strange god, or salved his conscience with the plea

that it was necessary to take some wealthy customer to the sightseeing.

Shouts and good-natured laughter and songs, with the roar of a multitude of moving feet, filled the air with an avalanche of sound. Tall flambeaux fixed on the walls and pillars of the ambulacrum, and numberless tall pine torches in and around the temple itself, shed a weird and not very adequate light over the immense gathering. The dust, caused by the movement of many feet on the pavement, rose in clouds and penetrated the throat and lungs of the three standing on the base of the column.

" 'Tis a wonderful sight—this gathering," said Isphar, "but methinks that if I were a Roman I should be unfaithful to Bacchus were I to remain here much longer. I fain would worship even now with a skin of wine."

He began to stoop down, as if to look for the ladder by which to descend from his elevated position.

"Wait! wait! my impatient fire-worshipper," said the voluntary guide, "wait a few minutes more, for the procession cannot delay much longer. See! see! they are fastening the oxen to the sacred car even now. It is to bear the mother of the gods. See how the beasts are garlanded with wreaths! How their golden horns shine in the light of the torches!"

The guide appeared to take the keenest

pleasure in the minutest details of the religious observance. As he spoke, a movement of the vast throng in the court, and especially of those near the temple, was observed.

"Do not now give up your vantage point," said Andros, "for the procession must pass in front of us in order to go through the gate here into the city."

Isphar, impatient of restraint as he was, saw that he held a particularly advantageous position, and notwithstanding his thirst, decided to remain.

Meanwhile, a company of temple guards had come down the ten steps of the temple, and began to clear a way for the procession. They were tall, strong men, far-eastern Asiatics, and their high cylindrical hats made them appear taller. Each carried a long staff or a good stout cudgel, and seemed to know how to use it. A similar company issued from the western door behind the altar of Diana, through which Andros had previously escaped. The two companies worked towards each other on the north side of the temple and soon cleared a way.

In a few minutes the ritual procession began to move in the direction of the gate near which Andros and Isphar were standing. First came the guards, dressed in Persian fashion. These interested Isphar very much, for although a native of Cyprus, he was of Persian parentage and wore the national

dress. The long coats of the guards reached to the feet and were of various striped colors. In some instances the stripes ran longitudinally, in others horizontally. In front of the high cylindrical hat each wore a large crescent-shaped piece of metal, either of brass or silver. It constituted the badge of servitude to the temple of Diana Luna.

These were followed by about fifty Ephesian youths of good families, in their tight-fitting national costume, but without cloaks. They wore tight-fitting trousers reaching to the ankles and close vests with sleeves which reached to the wrists. Many were dressed in party colors, one leg and the opposite side of the upper portion of the garment being of one color, and the corresponding parts of another. In other cases, the left side was one color and the right another. White and black, green and pink, brown and grey, black and yellow, were some of the combinations of colors of the dresses of this company of dancers.

Immediately behind them were about three dozen musicians, the throbbing of whose drums and the crash of whose brass crembalæ sounded wildly above the shouting and hurrahing of the throng. The shrill call of the flutes, the rattle of the castanets and the striking of the tambourines, added rather to the noise than to the music of the procession. The crude drums were made of partially cured hides stretched over a frame-

work of wood. They were beaten without intermission. The music produced was barbaric and maddening, and appeared to be an incentive to the unbridled license of the night.

Behind these musicians came the first company of corybantes, or dancing girls. Their eyes were brightened and made to appear larger by a liberal use of lead. Their cheeks were painted with a brilliant red pigment found in abundance in the neighborhood of Ephesus. Many of these corybantes wore crowns of water-lilies. Some wore one large blossom over each ear. The more active, or, correctly, the more violent, of the dancers of this group provided themselves with artificial lilies. The hair was loose and rose and fell in waves as they danced. The costumes of the dancing girls were Greek in design. The dress was parted at the knee, being held in position there by golden buckles. Fastened at the waist, shoulders, and to the bracelets at the wrists, were ample folds of the muslin of Cos, which, when the arms were waved about in the gyrations of the dance, resembled the graceful fluttering of a butterfly's wings.

The priests, who came next, were, in reality, a scurvy looking set. By their appearance they amply bore out the general impression of the criminality which was attached to their name and office. They appeared unkempt and uncouth. Their beards

were, generally, long and untidy, their robes unclean. Their appearance added nothing to the æsthetic value of the procession. They were, in fact, in the worship of Diana, merely secondary functionaries, and their presence at the rites was perfunctory. The real governing power and all the authority of the temple, rivalling the civic authority, and to some extent even the pro-consular—lay, not with the priests, but with the arch-priestess, or Essen.

The distinctly æsthetic portion of the ritual procession was found in the symbol bearers, who immediately preceded the high priestess. Among this group were fishermen bearing nets and fish; hunters with bow and quiver, and some wearing antlers on their heads; children carrying baskets of fruit; young women representing nymphs from the forests and streams. Some young women wore on the head a crescent-shape moon of silver from which flowed a silver-spangled veil, completely enveloping the person. Others wore a silver disc; others a black disc, each representing some phase of the moon, which was worshipped as Diana the world over.

Many others wore masks to represent the attendants who are supposed to surround the goddess whom they served. Fauns, satyrs, monstrous beings and men representing winged genii—all danced before the triumphal car of the Essen.

Others represented abstract feelings by means of large masks. Joy, laughter, grief, dignity, vulgarity were represented in this way, the artificial faces being works of no inconsiderable artistic merit. The comic was largely in evidence, and these seemed to take the popular fancy. Besides a number of tragic masks, there were, in this large group of mummers, those who wore masks supposed to represent portraits of living or dead personages. The thrysus, or spear, carried by many persons in this group was merely a reed. By this arrangement the frenzy of the devotees was rendered harmless when the dancing became orgiastic.

Immediately following this group of symbol bearers came the white, garlanded car of the high priestess. She was a tall woman and appeared taller by the device of a high-turreted golden crown, from which fell a thin silver veil, flowing over a rich purple robe which reached to her feet. She was seated on a white throne and carried a sceptre of gold tipped with a silver crescent moon. Around her chariot were grouped a large number of Melissæ, or priestesses, and many dancing girls.

The musicians who preceded the car which contained a statue of Diana produced a higher grade of music. Some carried the phorminx, or large lyre; others, the cithara, or smaller lyre; others, again, had lyres made of tortoise-shell and called the chelys. These

were struck without the plectrum. The barbitos supplied the bass. This company of players produced sweet but by no means loud music. In this group of the choicest temple musicians the flutes, cymbals and drums were missing.

The statue of Diana used in the outdoor processions was not so large as the one kept behind the purple veil, which had caused so much disgust and disappointment to Andros, but was a much more beautiful work of art. On these occasions it was adorned with the most costly raiment. It was carried on a cart drawn by a black and a white ox, symbolical of the full and dark of the moon.

This statue was given Diana's Greek name of Artemis, who was regarded as having the power to cure diseases. Sometimes it was designated Apis, from the beauty of her countenance. The head and bust were of purest alabaster. The former, on this occasion, was crowned with a golden circlet, from which was pendant a thin white veil which fell over a golden chlamys fastened at the shoulder with a jewelled clasp. Beneath the chlamys was a long tunic of imperial purple, and beneath it was a robe of cloth-of-gold reaching to the feet. Each hand was supported with a golden rod, which helped to keep the statue steady on the car when the oxen became restive. In the bracelets and armlets and in the golden circlet were

innumerable jewels which glistened in the light of the torches.

As the sacred car passed along, the enthusiasm of the people seemed to break all bounds. Men and women raised their hands on high and shouted: "Great is Diana! O Artemis, hear us and cure our ills!"

During the Artemision festival there appeared certain mock personages representing the gods. These followed in the wake of Diana, as if to give her supreme honor in her city of Ephesus. In the games in honor of Jupiter at Antioch these mock deities received divine honors, and there was something very similar practiced at Ephesus.

Behind the sacred car of Diana rode a mock Jupiter, who during the whole month of the festivities did not go home, or recline upon a bed, but slept upon the ground in the open air, on stones, or on a clean rug or rush mats. This mock deity was surrounded by attendants. He wore a robe as white as snow and glittering with golden ornaments. On his head was a crown of carbuncles, pearls and other precious stones. He carried a wand of white ivory and wore white sandals.

A mock Apollo was robed in white, wearing a credemon, or crown of golden laurel leaves. A Mercury was similarly clad in a white silk robe, and with a similar crown of laurel.

Behind these came young women bearing

ivy and vine branches in honor of Bacchus, branches of poplar to represent Hercules, bunches of wheat ears as typical of Ceres, sprays of myrtle for Venus, fir twigs for the fauns and sylvans, and reeds to represent the river gods.

After these came more corybantes and musicians. This last band of players, like those at the head of the procession, seemed to care more for noise than for music. The sound of their rude drums, and the shrill syrinx, or Pan's flutes, aroused the populace to a delirium of madness.

During the passing of the procession Ishpar became more and more excited. When the last of the corybantes had danced past the pedestal on which the three were standing, he begged Andros to come with him to the agora, or the gymnasium, or some other place where he could view it all again. Andros excused himself, saying that early in the morning he had to go to the Silenusian lakes to look after his fishing interests, but recommended the guide who had procured them their elevated position.

"Thou knowest my house," he said to the guide; "bring back my friend Ishpar and thou shalt be rewarded."

"I will not trouble thee or thy Ephesian guide," said the visitor from Cyprus, who was offended at the refusal of Andros, "I can find my way alone. In the morning send my umbrella bearer to the ship by which I re-

turn. When thou comest to Salamis thou shalt receive more hospitable entertainment."

He was going to separate himself from Andros in a fit of ill-temper.

"Stop! stop! my friend. No Ephesian, during Diana's festival, will allow a charge of that nature. Withdraw it, or thou wilt force me to go with thee at my great inconvenience, for I have many fishermen to look after early to-morrow morning."

"As thou wilt, O ship-owner, but haste thee in thy decision. The last of the dancers have passed out of the temple grounds."

Andros, seeing that the Cyprian was wholly infatuated with the sights of the evening and would probably follow the procession around the city until it returned to the temple precincts, asked the guide whether he would be willing to accompany the stranger. The man agreed.

"Take good care of him. Remember the town is full of deceits. Here is money to secure the best positions. Thou knowest my house. Bring him safely home. He will never find his way there by himself. When thou comest, thou mayest sleep in the atrium until morning, when I will pay thee well for thy trouble."

Turning to Isphar, he said: "Be not angry, my welcome friend. It is impossible for me to accompany thee farther. This

guide will show thee all, and my steward shall receive thee when thou returnest."

The merchant of Salamis was by this time a little ashamed of his petulant manner. The metropolis of Asia was a large city. The noise and hurry of its inhabitants, whether on business or pleasure bent, had excited him all day. Not until the shouting ceased and there was comparative quiet in the temple precincts did he realize that he had spoken somewhat ungraciously to his host.

"Forgive me my hasty tongue, good mine host. 'Twere ungracious not to recognize thine hospitality. I will go with this young man, and in the morning I will thank thee again."

Isphar and the guide descended from the marble block and hurried forward to overtake the procession. Andros waited until the crowd had thinned somewhat and then walked thoughtfully towards his house.

CHAPTER XV

STILL IN THE DARK

The traveller from Salamis did not return that night to the house of Andros. Long after daylight the next morning the guide to whom he had been entrusted came to Andros and told him that Isphar had partaken very freely of wine on several occasions during the evening, and, as the night advanced, became disputatious, refusing to come back to the house of his host, but insisting on being guided to the vessel in which he had sailed.

"I will then postpone my visit to the lakes and go to the city port and see after the comfort of my guest."

"That will avail thee little for hours to come," replied the guide, "for it was long after dawn before Isphar was safely on the sailing vessel. I warrant me he will sleep soundly until the sun sinks into the western sea."

"Was he very drunk?"

"So much so," said the other, laughing, "that although he could sit in the boat safely enough, when we arrived at the vessel's side he was incapable of climbing the ladder. I called to the sailors, who recognized him, and four of them lifted him to the deck.

There he lies now on a sail, so fast asleep that Jove's thunder would not rouse him."

"Go back to the vessel," said Andros, "and tell the captain to be careful of his comfort. Let him rig a sail for shade. Tell him to supply him with good wine when he awakens, and send a messenger to me when that occurs."

While waiting for the messenger, Andros thought deeply and long over the preceding night's procession and the orgies which he knew had followed.

Never had the city been more enthusiastic over the spring festival, and never had there appeared greater indecencies on the streets. The whole populace seemed to have given itself over to one vast orgy. As he slowly wended his way homeward amid the eddying crowds of men and women, he had seen but few sober people on the streets. Ribald songs and excesses offended the eye and ear.

Andros was more disgusted than ever with it all. He was ill at ease with himself. Something was stirring within him the like of which he had never experienced before. There was an awakened feeling in his breast, but it was wholly condemnatory, and he did not understand it. Never before had the still, small, persistent voice been so loud. The acquaintance with the family of Elymas had opened up to his mind the possibility of a new way of living, which he admitted was more consistent with the dictates of reason

than the life he had hitherto followed, although that had been, perhaps, above the average of the morality of the citizens of Ephesus, especially in integrity and in cleanness of life.

But why should the being present at the ritual procession—an action which he had performed ever since he was old enough to be alone on the streets—why should the being present on this particular occasion cause him so much uneasiness? Was his love-sickness causing him to become womanish? Womanish! Had there not been as many women on the streets as men on the previous night? Did not the women of Ephesus, during the festival, vie with the men in excesses in the so-called honoring of Diana?

Was he becoming morbid? he asked himself. This regret in his breast was an actual thing to him, and do what he would he could not get rid of the new experience. "Pshaw!" he said to himself, "I am an Ephesian. I have been brought up in the cultus of Diana. Am I going to give it up? What was good enough for my forefathers is surely good enough for me. All these recent thoughts are mere foolishness. I will go to the temple and offer incense, and then my mind will be once more at ease."

He started out in the direction of the temple, his mind full of conflicting thoughts. He walked slowly, with bent head, and ob-

servant of little. Suddenly he was vaguely conscious of some one shouting. Pulling himself together with an effort, he realized that the shouting was directed at him.

"Justice! justice! pay me for my loss! 'Twas thou that overthrew my basket of cakes and sweet paste. Pay! pay! or I shall take thee before the tribunal."

Andros realized that it was the old cake-seller whom he had upset when escaping from the temple two weeks before. A flash of amusement crossed his face at the remembrance of the catastrophe that had befallen the ragged old vendor.

"Pay! pay! I have sought thee everywhere. Now I have thee. If thou payest not for my loss, thou goest straight to the city chancellor."

"Canst thou prove it was I?" asked Andros, good humoredly.

"That can I. I know thee well—Andros the fish merchant and owner of ships. Times are changed indeed from thy father's time. He would not have used an old man so."

"Didst thou know him?"

"Aye, aye; a good, kind man to such as I. But thou payest for my loss."

"Wait one moment, friend. Canst thou prove that I was the cause of it?"

"Surely I can. Didst thou not knock the basket from my head and send my wares to the dust?"

"Thou sayest that I did. Art thou sure?"

"Of course I am sure. Do not all men know thee in Ephesus?"

"Well, that may be so. But canst thou prove that I was responsible for thy loss?"

"Responsible! By the great goddess! Thou didst it, didst thou not?"

"That is not the question. Was I responsible for the doing?"

The angry old street merchant seemed a little puzzled. He paused a minute in his urgent demands, as if to settle the responsibility in his mind.

"Thou sawest me coming—running very fast. Did I not beckon to thee to stand out of the way? Others gave me clear space. Thou wert either too perverse or too stupid to do the same."

"But I—"

"Wait. Am I justly held responsible for a loss caused by thine own perversity, or thy stupidity? Answer me that."

"But thou destroyedst my living. I fasted that night, and it was the festival time, too."

"That I am sorry for, but with whom lies the blame?"

"I lost my cakes," persisted the old man.

"Answer this other question. Do not the laws of Ephesus permit that sports—footraces, boxing, and other games—take place in the public streets during Artemision?"

"Most certainly."

"Well, then, was I not engaged in a lawful occupation on that afternoon. Remem-

ber thou wert not in the temple grounds, but outside the gate, therefore in the city street where the law holds. I was engaged in a foot-race for a certainty—('The motive of that race is neither here nor there,' he added sotto voce)—therefore thou shouldst have gotten out of my way."

The old man saw he was caught. He paused for some moments, while Andros looked on with an amused smile.

"I am old, and do not see well," said the cake-seller. "I was confused at the shouting; I did not know which way to turn quick enough, and so I stood still."

From imperative he had become meek and almost pleading. Andros was a little touched at the old man's trouble. He did not wish to be harsh. Since his love for Lydda had become a real thing in his life, his sympathy for others had increased. "That is well," he said, not unkindly. "Since thou admittest that I was not responsible for the accident, I will tell thee what I will do. I will not pay thee, on principle. But I give thee enough gold to keep thee from want. Take this, and when it is gone come to me again."

It took the old vendor of sweetmeats some little time to realize his good fortune. He was then as profuse in his expressions of gratitude as his former demands had been importunate. The doer of this kindly act, in order to escape the praise that was being

showered on him by the cake-seller, and the complimentary remarks of those who had listened to the dialogue, moved away.

This incident gave a different direction to his thoughts. Instead of going straight to the temple, he paused in his walk. The meeting of the old street merchant had recalled his mind back to his disappointment and his disgust at the first sight of the statue behind the veil. All his repugnance to the worship, or, as he understood it, the abuse of that worship, returned. Instead of walking toward the temple, as was his first intention, he found himself at the end of the street along which he had run when fleeing for his life. He now determined to continue his walk to the house of Pelopidas, for he had many questions to put to Elymas.

CHAPTER XVI

SOWING THE SEED

"Dost thou think, good Elymas," said Andros after he had been welcomed by his friend, "that I did wrong yesternight in witnessing the rites of Diana?"

"Hadst thou any doubt as to the rectitude of thy actions?" asked Elymas.

"I hardly know, my faithful friend. Let me explain the condition of my mind. Thou must know that since my brief sojourn in thy family, and even before that time, I have experienced a repugnance to the orgies I see all around me. Such debaucheries seem not compatible with the dignity of one who possesses reason, which is surely a spark—an emanation of the deity. Is it not so?"

"Reason is one of the highest gifts of the deity to man, but it is not an emanation from the deity."

"It is so godlike—or what we suppose to be godlike—a quality in man that to me it seems that it must be of divine origin."

"It is, but not therefore divine itself. The deity is indivisible, and therefore could not, as it were, separate particles of himself and implant them in our souls. But proceed, Andros, with thy story."

"My repugnance to the coarseness of our worship is, at times, intense; at other times there is the return of the habit of a lifetime, and I take all for granted and say what is, is right. But when I am alone, and uninfluenced by exterior surroundings or by any ulterior motive within—when, in fact, I am in a normal, rational state, the falsity of our worship overwhelms me. After such cogitations, in which I feel myself lifted out of myself, when I go back to the religious practices of my ancestors I am unhappy. Why is this, O Elymas? Why should I not have peace in my heart instead of an upbraiding sense of having done something wrong?"

"It is the voice of conscience speaking in you, Andros."

"Conscience! What is conscience?"

"When thou hast done some good action —some noble deed—wert thou not happy afterwards? Was there not an approving sense within thee?"

"Yes, yes," replied the other. "I gave old Cleon some gold just now. I at once felt happier for it. Perhaps it was at seeing the old man's tears of gratitude and hearing the plaudits of those who witnessed my deed. I know not."

"That was legitimate pleasure, but not the real cause of thy happiness. It came from an approving conscience."

"But what is conscience? Where does it reside? Can I gain or lose it?"

"It is, good friend, an inward monitor of the soul, planted in the breast of every human being by the great God."

"By Diana or Jupiter?"

"No, no. By the great and only God, the Creator of all things."

"Great and only God! I do not understand. The world is full of gods. Every nation has its own, either god or goddess. As thou knowest, the fame of our goddess is world-wide."

"If thou continuest to favor us with thy visits I will explain that in good time. Let me proceed with the question of conscience. If thou wilt look back upon thy experience thou wilt see that thou hast always possessed it. It is supreme and beyond our domestic life; it transcends our civil and political life; it is even supreme to religion itself. What it says, thou must perforce follow. As often as, through pride or passion or any other evil propensity, thou goest against it, thou art unhappy. It will not let thee rest. Is it not true that in following its dictates thou findest peace?"

Andros was silent for some minutes, nor did Elymas interrupt his thoughts. He desired that what he had said should sink deep into his friend's consciousness. At length Andros broke the silence:

"I believe thou art right. I certainly am happier when I am doing good, and there is something within me that approves. On the

contrary, when I give way to furious anger there is, again, something within me that tells me I am acting in an unmanly way. When I indulge in too much Pramnian wine, there is something which reproves. 'Tis precisely this uneasy feeling within me that led me to doubt of the correctness of a worship which sanctions and openly advocates and practices drunkenness as an overt act of religious worship to a deity."

"Then, to come back to thy first question, didst thou do wrong last night in witnessing the ritual procession? I say the answer is found in thine own breast. Thy conscience upbraided thee, and it does so yet; therefore, thou didst wrong."

"I am sorry," said Andros, simply.

"That is good, my friend. Because thou art sorry thou wilt not offend again."

"Why dost thou desire that I go not again to the temple, good Elymas?" asked Andros. "Thou seemest to take as much interest in me as in thine own sons. Why art thou so kind?"

"Because I see in thee an image and likeness of a mysterious Being, and in being good and kind to thee, I am good towards Him, my friend."

"A mysterious being in me! Am I possessed by a divinity! Thou surely dost not say that I am a god. I know thou wouldst not flatter. What dost thou mean?"

"I did not say that thou art or hast a

divinity, but I said thou hast within thee the likeness of something divine. Thou hast a soul."

"That Socrates and Plato have taught me. What then?"

"That soul is immortal and will live on for eons of time after thy body shall have crumbled into dust. It will some day be reunited to thy body and both shall be happy or miserable for all eternity."

"But how knowest thou that this soul of mine shall last forever?"

"Because, good friend, of thy unfulfilled capacity for happiness."

Andros looked up with a momentary anger in his eyes. He thought that Elymas was amusing himself at his expense. At the moment he was in far too serious a mood for trifling, and he began to experience a feeling of resentment.

Looking sharply, however, at the serious, placid face of Elymas he became convinced of his mistake.

"I thought thou wert making sport of me, but now I know thou art not."

"It will ill become me to trifle on so serious a subject," said Elymas.

"Proceed, my friend. Let me know thine argument."

"Were Abdiel here he would speak better than I. I would he were here. I said the soul is proved to be immortal from its present unfulfilled capacity for complete happi-

ness. God would have wrought in vain in giving this capacity if He were not able to satisfy it. Didst thou ever see a man perfectly happy, Andros?"

Andros thought for some time. At length he said:

"I have been very happy, thanks to the goddess, at least for a time."

"For a time! But didst thou never feel that it is within thee to enjoy greater things and be still happier than thou hast yet ever been? Was thine own capacity ever satisfied?"

"Alas, no! There have always been dregs in my cup of pleasure, or the desired pleasure has been unattainable."

"But if the Supreme Being has placed that capacity in thy soul must He not satisfy it, either here or hereafter?"

"It would seem so, unless He is not all-efficient."

"Granting that thy answer is true, and granting that this capacity within thee, according to thine own words, has never been satisfied in this life, does it not follow that it must be in the next?"

"Most certainly."

"Then, on the theory of an unsatisfied capacity for happiness, thou grantest a life after this one?"

"I must, perforce. But may not the soul, after it has crossed the Styx, have this

capacity for infinite happiness satisfied, and then when once satisfied, cease to exist?"

"No, for there would be a contradiction. If in the next world I have the foreboding fear of annihilation forever looming up on my horizon, would I be said to enjoy complete happiness? Dost thou not realize that existence is our greatest good, and non-existence the greatest of all possible evils? If, then, I had always the fear of ceasing to be—this greatest of all evils—constantly before me, how could I be completely happy, or even happy at all? Canst thou not see that the soul, by its very capacity for complete happiness, must last forever, and so is immortal?"

Andros was too intelligent not to grasp the argument, and too honest not to acquiesce. "I see, I see," he cried, "thanks to thee, my good friend. Thou hast given me a new consolation. Thy statement that the body, although crumbled into dust, will one day be reunited to the soul has no difficulty for me. I love my body, and as I am destined to complete happiness I must get it back again at some time, or the happiness of my soul would lack its completeness and I should be dissatisfied. I see it all now."

"See, then, Andros, that thou so live that thou finally miss not this completion of happiness of which thou possessest so great a capacity."

"How can I miss it? It must necessarily come."

He was elated with the great thought—something more sublime than had ever entered his mind before. Yet, amid his enthusiasm, Elymas detected a tinge of fatalism.

"Couldst thou not, Andros, have remained away from the temple grounds last night?" he asked.

"Most certainly."

"And couldst thou not have gone this afternoon to the Silenusian lakes, hadst thou chosen, instead of giving us the pleasure of thy company?"

"Most assuredly," answered Andros.

"Canst thou not walk to the right or the left, as pleaseth thee?"

"Yes."

"What follows from this power of choice?"

"That my will is free. I can do or not do, as I will."

"Yet, remember the object of the will is the good, which it must always desire. Whatever we desire, we desire under some form of good. In the order of our moral actions our conscience is the monitor and guide, and it will save us from being deceived. If, under the appearance of some good to be obtained, we do wrong, conscience will chide and check us and lead us, finally, to attain our greatest good, which is complete happiness. When we disregard this

inward monitor we go astray, and must either retrace our steps, or, continuing to go against it, never reach the complete happiness of which we have been speaking. So you see that although this capacity for complete happiness has been given to you, it is possible never to reach it."

"But a man would be a fool to put obstacles in the way of reaching it!"

"Precisely, and that is what he does when he acts against his conscience."

"Thou hast given me many things to think about, Elymas. I will walk alone and think them over. I had intended to spend the evening with thy family, but these great thoughts now revolving in my mind would make me a poor and distracted visitor. I will come again," and without even going into the house, he immediately walked away towards his home.

CHAPTER XVII

AN EPHESIAN ATELIER

When Aratus left the cave of Arachne, a little distance off the main travelled road to Magnesia, and discovered that the two sailors had deserted him, he was very much frightened. He also feared that the witch would release her terrible hound. There were known to exist in the surrounding low hills companies of robber bands who frequently and with startling boldness waylaid travellers.

More than once, recently, had the pro-consul sent out detachments of soldiers to rid the neighborhood, but in some mysterious way the bandits always gathered again soon after their dispersion. The wise ones of the city winked at each other and hinted that the pro-consular purse was not growing lighter.

The wine Aratus had taken had given him sufficient courage to face the witch in her cave, but as its effects died away on his homeward journey, he became more and more frightened, starting at his own shadow and fearful of the noises of the night. The hooting of an owl set him trembling, and the

cry of the young foxes in the hills made his flesh creep.

Nothing but the desperate condition of his purse and his vanishing credit could have induced him to consult the old woman. He had not bargained for the solitary journey back to the city. He even feared, and with good reason, that the two ruffianly sailors whom he had paid to escort him would be waiting for him in some lonely spot, and perhaps murder him. He deserted the main travelled road and ran from boulder to boulder, from tree to tree, as he made his way homeward.

By one of those singular chances which sometimes come to cowards he was not molested. When he approached the city gate his courage revived and his thoughts at once reverted to his plan of wreaking vengeance on Andros. He had not settled upon any definite mode of action. He hugged the precious vial, which he had hidden in the fold of his tunic, and gloated over its potency. Should he administer merely the two or three drops, or should he give more to his enemy when the occasion offered?

With still no definitely formulated plan in his mind he sauntered, two days later, into the workshop of Demetrius, the silversmith. He was known to most of the workmen and passed freely in and out among them, nodding to one and chatting to another as he went.

It was now near the end of the festival season. Most of the artisans, having had sufficient pleasure and amusement, were again at their work-benches. Some were busy making chalk or clay moulds or models. Others were attending to small portable furnaces in which they were melting silver to run into the smaller moulds. In another part of the shop men were engaged in chiselling or rasping the rough portions of small statues which were sufficiently cool to be handled. Others were polishing the almost finished product of the workshop. It was a busy scene. Some thirty men were at different occupations.

The walls of the room were ornamented with various models of Diana in clay, and in Pion marble. She was represented as the Huntress, as Magos, the goddess of magic, or as Hecate, crowned with snakes and wearing a bearskin. Bows, quivers, arrows and other symbols of the goddess were arranged on the walls, with nets and antlers and shields. Models of dogs and deer were placed here and there in conspicuous places for the benefit of the artists who made the statues in miniature for the famous household shrines.

Rhytons, or drinking horns, terminating in a greyhound's head, armlets, eagle-tipped sceptres, fans, sandals, sacrificial knives and cases adorned the walls and shelves. A sample of almost every personal adornment,

Grecian or Roman, was found in this workshop or studio. Demetrius gave his artists and designers full liberty in the execution of their work, and in consequence the place was filled with many things that might suggest new designs or new poses for statues, which were first moulded in clay and then copied in silver. As a good Ephesian, Demetrius was a devoted worshipper of Diana, yet that did not prevent him from taking orders for shrines for any other of the gods. His workshop, therefore, resembled a museum of valuable and curious models of many gods.

Many of the workmen who were not intimate with him regarded Aratus as a wealthy Ephesian of leisure, for he always managed to dress as one of the wealthier class. There were but one or two among them who knew his exact financial standing, and how his few acres of vine-lands barely sufficed to keep him in straightened idleness. These knew of his ambitions in the way of making a wealthy marriage with the daughter of Mellanides, but they also knew that his chances of success were of the slightest. These two workmen were aware that Andros was by far the greater favorite with Mellanides, and both believed that the old soldier's daughter looked with favoring eye on him who had recently saved her life. Andros was popular in the workshop, for he was free with silver

coins for wine among the workmen. Aratus never untied his purse-strings there.

"How are thy friends, the Hebrews, to-day, Aratus?" asked Callus, the elder of the two who knew of his financial condition.

"What is that to thee? I have no friends who are Jews?"

"Nevertheless, as report goes, they are kind to thee. Thou must offer them a good security for their loans."

"How knowest thou that I borrow from them? I tell not my affairs to workmen," he said, superciliously.

"Thou hast no need," replied Callus, a little viciously; "thine affairs are well known. Thinkest thou that the people on the agora know not what passes where money is concerned?"

"Yes," remarked the second workman, "the slimness of thy purse is as well known by those who wish to know as if thou hadst sent a herald to proclaim it."

"Thou follower of Mercury!* Canst thou not speak the truth for once, thou man of three letters.† Thou knowest nought of my affairs. I tell not mine affairs to workmen," and he began arranging his toga virilis with affectation.

"Thou hast no need to do so. Workingmen—honest workingmen—who are not afraid to labor for their living, nor too idle,

*Liar. †Fur, thief.

often find out things that those who ape patricians without the patricians' wealth would not for worlds have known."

"By Hecate's dogs, thou insultest me. I will have thee whipped. I will have Demetrius discharge thee. I will drag thee before the Chancellor's tribunal for slander —I—I will—"

Callus and his companion burst into a hearty and amused laugh. They never took Aratus seriously. He grew more angry.

"Listen, thou poor vine-grower," continued the artisan, "listen. Thou wilt never marry the beautiful Lydda, daughter of Mellanides. Thy chances grow less and less each day. The Jews know this. They are well informed. Thou hast borrowed thy last gold piece from every Jew in Ephesus. Thy credit is gone. Even Arachne's potion will not avail thee. We know thou didst run from rock to rock on thy return like a frightened hare. Thou needest not be so fearful. The gods, when they reserve a man for a worse fate, will not let brigands slit his throat. If thou art born to be hanged thou wilt never be drowned."

Aratus was now furious. He could not understand how these men of Demetrius' shop had learned so much about him and his recent movements, and his only partially formed designs. He did not know that much of what they had said was good guesswork. He forgot that the workshop of Demetrius

and the pleasant garden around it were the resort of many of the wealthier people of Ephesus, where the transactions of the money lenders were freely discussed, and often within the hearing of the workmen.

Callus and his companion were good-natured, and would often have given Aratus hints that might have turned to his own benefit, but the latter was vain and supercilious and they knew that he pretended to a station far above their own. They were aware of the slimness of the income upon which he was living as a man of leisure. At first they were amused, but when he assumed the airs of a patrician, they became annoyed and often vexed him with cutting speeches.

This time they had spoken with more venom than they had ever done before, and Aratus was extremely angry. He turned away from his two tormentors with something very like a curse upon his lips, to which they responded with a hearty laugh as they again gave their attention to the fashioning of clay models.

In turning hastily, Aratus almost ran into the arms of Demetrius.

"The gods be praised! Thou art, O Aratus, an early patron. The Jews say an early customer bringeth good fortune. Ten of my patrons come at the third hour of the morning to walk in my garden. Hast left an order with Callus for a statue of Diana to weigh a thousand ounces of silver? Callus

is honest. Thy statue shall correspond in weight to thy supply of silver. It shall displace as much water as the unwrought material. Oh, Callus is honest. He would not cheat thee of an obolus."

The silversmith amused himself. It was often a source of amusement to Demetrius to watch the airs of his visitor and see him attempt to play the lordly patrician.

"No, O silversmith," replied Aratus, who could never discover when he was being quizzed and received all remarks addressed to him seriously. "No, I am not thinking to-day of leaving such an order. Some other time—" and he waved his hand as if dismissing a subject too trivial to waste much time over.

"Dear me! dear me!" said Demetrius, in a half comical way, "we have taken no order of consequence all the Artemision. Let me sell thee this shrine of Diana. Thou shalt have it for its weight in silver and one-third its weight in the same metal for the cost of workmanship. It weighs not more than three hundred ounces."

Still unable to see that he was being laughed at, Aratus again seriously refused to purchase. Demetrius continued:

"Ha! what shrine have I been offering thee? It is fortunate thou didst not desire to buy this particular statue, as it has been purchased by thy friend Andros, who intends to present it to the daughter of Mel-

lanides on her birthday next month. It will cost him nearly a year's profits of his fisheries."

"Friend!" said Aratus sneeringly.

Demetrius saw with amusement the look of intense anger come over the face of his visitor.

"Friend! I tell thee he is mine enemy. I would that he were out of my way."

"He was once, lately, very nearly out of thy way for all time," said Demetrius, laughing now at the remembrance of his former anger and of the chase he had caused to be given after Andros at the memorable visit to the temple. The silversmith had soon regarded the whole affair as trifling and bore no ill-will toward Andros, remembering that he had been in a state of religious frenzy at the time. As soon as the excitement subsided, he had been rather pleased than otherwise that no harm had befallen Andros.

"Out of my way! Would that it were so! How sayest thou?"

Demetrius gave him the full details of the incident of the temple. As the recital proceeded the listener became very much excited. His eyes shone with anticipated revenge. He would set the priests of Diana on the scent of this blasphemy. He would denounce the traitor. He would now sweep him aside from his path. After all, there would be no need to use the dread potion of

Arachne. At this, notwithstanding his anger, he felt relieved, for he dreaded the taking of a man's life, and he knew he could not trust himself to administer two or three drops only of the poison.

"He blasphemed the goddess! Ho! ho! He shall pay for it! Now I have caught him. At length the opportunity has come. A renegade from the worship of Ephesus!"

"Be not too sure of that," said Demetrius, somewhat nettled, for he saw that Aratus was capable of making mischief. "This does not look as if Andros were rejecting, or even neglecting, the religion of Diana." He pointed to the valuable silver shrine.

"I know he was present at the last ritual procession, for Callus saw him on the pedestal of one of the pillars near the gate, with one of his customers from Cyprus. The priests know of this escapade, and long ago he has ingratiated himself with them. He will not be molested. He has lined their purse with silver, I suppose. He is in good favor again, at all events, and thy efforts to hurt him in that direction will be like the waves dashing against a rock. The rock remains unmoved."

"But he blasphemed—"

"Which has been forgiven and forgotten by the priests long ago. Thou canst not harm him there. Thou must look in another direction to vent thy spleen."

"Spleen!" said Aratus, indignantly.

"Yes, friend, thy spleen. Every one knows thou are envious of Andros on account of the favor with which he is received in the house of Mellanides. Be fair. Be a man. Win her, if thou canst, by honorable means. I know thy family. It would grieve thy father, were he living now, if he saw his own son using dishonorable means of getting rid of a rival. Do not start! Every one in Ephesus—the Jew money lenders especially—knows of thy love affair. Act the part of a man, and let the better man win, I say."

With this sound admonition Demetrius walked away to give some directions to a workman at the other end of the long room. The two, during this talk, had stood very near a large furnace in one corner. There was a man at the bellows now busily working them. He was within earshot, and by not letting the leather of the bellows creak and groan more than was absolutely necessary, had heard all that passed between Aratus and his master. When the master went away, he said in a low voice to Aratus:

"That plan has failed, but it is in my power to help thee."

Aratus looked around and saw a thickset man, with broad shoulders and long sinewy arms of remarkable strength. His muscles stood out in great knots. The fingers, grimy and dirty from his occupation, were long and very powerful, and as they twitched, and closed and opened again, Aratus felt that his

chance of surviving would be slim were they once wound around his throat. The dwarf's head appeared enormously large, and was covered with a crop of coarse black hair, the roots of which grew far down on his low forehead, which was blackened from the smoke of the furnace. Bushy and protruding eyebrows shaded a pair of glaring prominent eyes full of malice and the worst passions of man. His tunic had been thrown aside, and the under garment was open and exposed a hairy chest. The grotesque figure had more the resemblance of a beast than a man.

"Who art thou?" said Aratus, stepping back a couple of paces.

"Coward! why dost thou retreat? Art afraid of an ugly form, and yet wouldst put a rival out of thy path!"

"Who art thou?"

"A dense Scythian forest hid the hut where I was born. But that is naught to thee. I can help thee if thou wilt. It is in my power."

"What canst thou do?"

"If thou wouldst know, meet me at the fountain in the agora venalis, where I eat my bread and figs at the hour of noon."

The dwarf, either from fear of being seen talking with Aratus, or to make himself appear a mysterious character to that individual, turned to his bellows and would not say another word.

CHAPTER XVIII

PLOTTING

Ephesus presented at noon an animated scene. By that hour the business of the city was in full swing and the streets were thronged with merchants and buyers as well as pleasure seekers. The more leisurely class going to or returning from their first plunge in the public baths, by the brightness and variety of color of their costumes lent a pleasing cheerfulness to the picture. Artisans and laborers, from atelier and workshop, released from toil during the period of the midday meal, poured out into the sunshine they so much loved, and congregated in large numbers around the marble basin of a fountain in the agora venalis, which was fed by a spring of deliciously cool water. The overflow was drained off into the city port by an underground conduit.

Aratus sauntered near the fountain at the time specified by the dwarf, who recognized him long before he had finished his meal, but did not deign to take notice of him until he had washed down his figs and bread with copious draughts of the almost ice-cold water.

When the ill-favored hunchback looked

around, as if expecting some one, Aratus came forward from among the people thronging the agora. He did not put much confidence in the bellows-blower, yet he was curious to learn what he had to say.

"Come a little apart," said the dwarf, who, in the sunlight, looked grimier and dirtier than he did in the shade of the workshop. "I want not every one to hear what I shall say to thee."

The ill-assorted pair left the busy agora and went into a narrow street. They stood in the shade, and the dwarf leaned his misshapen back against the wall of a house.

"Thou wishest to be avenged on Andros, the owner of the sailing vessels?"

"How knowest thou that that is my desire?" asked Aratus, to whom it seemed at the moment that everybody in Ephesus knew his designs and projects. This was the third time that morning he had been told what he intended to do.

"How know I? Have I not ears? The workmen of the shop regard me as a mere animal, lacking all intelligence. They never hesitate to speak their secrets plainly before me. Because my body is ill-formed they think I am without sense, but they shall find their mistake ere long."

He was vindictive and there was a ferocious glare in his eyes.

"But what know they?"

"Callus knoweth all about thee. Didst

thou not have evidence of that this morning? And Demetrius—"

"Does Demetrius speak thus publicly about my concerns?"

"Demetrius hath many customers who come to his shop and to his garden, and these know thee well."

"And so my love affairs and my domestic concerns are public property," said Aratus, with disgust in his tones.

"Among many, yes."

"Thou sayest thou canst be of assistance to me. I will give thee gold if it is worth it."

"Keep thy money. I do not this for thy sake, but to avenge myself on Andros. He comes to the workshop and scatters his silver among the workmen, but never has he regarded me at my furnace more than as a curious animal to be gazed at, or as a wild beast in a cage. Only yesterday he scoffed at me and held me up to ridicule. I hate him —hate! hate!" and he trembled in his passionate anger.

Aratus was surprised at the vehemence of the dwarf's passion. He saw that he would be a willing aid in any scheme of revenge he might set on foot to wreak harm on his rival.

"Callus said this morning," continued the dwarf, "that thou hast a deadly potion prepared for Andros."

"What if I denied?"

"Thou wouldst be a fool. Thou hast such a potion."

"Well?"

"Use it not. Thou wilt not need it."

"How sayest thou? If the truth were told I would fain throw it away."

"Do not so. It cost thee gold. Give it into my keeping. I will see that it is put to a good use."

"Thou wilt administer it thyself to my rival?"

"I promise not this. I said not so. I told thee I would put it to good use, and so I will." Aratus took the vial from the inner fold of his tunic, and, after a period of hesitation, handed it to the dwarf.

"See how I trust thee," he said. "Now, how canst thou help me in this affair?"

"Know ye the habits of Andros?"

"Not those of recent days. He has resided some days at the mansion of Mellanides of late."

The dwarf pointed his long bony finger at Aratus, saying impressively:

"He is forsaking the gods!"

"What meanest thou? Speak. Demetrius told me this morning in thy hearing of his refusal to cry aloud in honor of the statue of Diana. But that has passed and is forgotten."

"Yet I tell thee, O Aratus, that Andros is forsaking the worship of the goddess of Ephesus. Come with me this evening beyond the southern city wall, and I will prove

my statement. It is time for me to return to my furnace."

When the dwarf had left him, the enemy of Andros pondered over his statements for a long time. He questioned himself whether he had done wisely in giving up the poison, to obtain which he had ventured so much. Might not this evil-looking specimen of a man be in the pay, and perhaps in the confidence of his enemy? Perhaps he was but a good actor after all. Might it not be a plot to secure the vial and convey it to Andros? Aratus could not decide whether he had been duped by an agent of Andros and at the instigation of Callus, the silver worker, or whether the dwarf was in earnest in his desire for revenge and would really, that evening, give him more valuable information which could be used against the lover of Lydda. After much hesitation he finally decided to keep his appointment at the city gate.

A few minutes after the sun had taken his evening bath and while the clouds were yet stained with crimson and purple, Aratus arrived at the appointed place of meeting. The dwarf was already there. In the fast fading light he looked less disreputable than at noon. Some attempt had been made to remove from his hands and face the marks of toil. He wore a dark cloak over his brown tunic, and but for the chronic untidiness of his hair and beard, and for a decided limp in

one leg, he would not have attracted attention.

"We will go a pace into these woods and rest upon the grass," said the bellows-blower, "although we go not far from the city gate or from the call of the guard, for it is said that robbers infest the place hereabout."

The two walked in silence for about a stone's throw from the wall. When both were seated on the roots of a gnarled oak, the dwarf began to speak:

"Knowest thou, Aratus, that within a mile to the west of thine own vineyard there are people who have entirely forsaken our goddess? I have been to the house and they have neither statue of Diana, nor Jupiter, nor any of the gods, nor even the images of their own ancestors."

"Hast thou brought me here to tell me this! There are plenty of men in Ephesus who worship neither god nor goddess!"

"But these people of whom I speak declare the immortal gods are evil spirits and lying spirits, and that all their worshippers are destined for the infernal regions!"

"This is a serious charge! Art thou sure? It would be sedition against the emperor. Art sure?"

"Yes, I know of what I speak. I have kept mine eyes open. There are many little companies of these blasphemers in and around Ephesus. Hadst thou known them thou wouldst have observed that none of them

participated in this year's Artemision. They go not to the temple of Diana, nor to the temple of any other god. 'Tis said they have their own rules and orgies which profane eyes, such as yours and mine, are never allowed to see. A fellow workman of mine assures me they devour children in the dark of the moon, worship the head of an ass as a god, and do many other monstrous things. 'Tis quite certain they have many strange mysteries."

"The last monstrosity, as thou callest it, is not so strange, or so very new, if thou will but think of it. Is not one of Hecate's symbols a horse's head? Do not many worship the symbol rather than the goddess? I ask thee again, hast thou brought me here to tell me only this?"

"Have patience, Aratus. I have a spicy morsel for thy tongue. Wouldst thou credit me were I to tell thee that one of thy friends hast joined these strange people?"

"One of my friends! I have innumerable friends. It is not surprising that even a friend of Aratus should make a fool of himself."

"One of thine enemies, then."

"I have but one—Andros. Dost thou mean him?"

"Aye."

"Ha! This is pleasant news! Mine enemy a blasphemer and a forsaker of the gods. Oh! I have him now! He shall not escape my clutches. This is better and surer than the

vial of Arachne! I will set the whole of the machinery of the temple to work. I thank thee, good man, but—but art thou certain of what thou sayest?"

"Most certain. I have followed him to the old house of Pelopidas several times—but think not I tell thee this for thine own sake alone. When thou dost set his enemies in motion against him thou art serving my purposes, too. I have sworn by the dogs of Proserpine that I will be avenged, and thy determination to do him harm by reason of thy rivalry becomes the instrument of my own desires. He shall find that this misshaped body hath a mind within it. Curse him! He hath treated me as a dog—as one beneath regard. He shall learn that I have a will that can work to his undoing. Thou art the means I choose to wreak my own vengeance."

Aratus did not feel at all complimented at the rôle he was forced into playing by the cleverness of the dwarf. That this ill-shapen bellows-blower should want to use him for his own purposes, and to make use of his spleen against Andros to bring about his own ends, was not at all complimentary to such a one as Aratus, who possessed an overabundance of self-esteem and a large fund of self-complacency. He was inclined to reject the information as of no concern of his, but he looked at the arms and fingers of the dwarf, and realized their wonderful muscular strength. He saw with what compara-

tively little effort those long and strong fingers could clutch his throat until the life was out of his body. Then, too, he admitted that the dwarf's calculations were correct. He certainly would do what he could to injure Andros, and here was too good an opportunity to be thrown away. He had but to put the megabyses of the temple on the track of his enemy and he could confidently await the results he desired.

The dwarf had thought all this out carefully. He had, in fact, chosen Aratus to accomplish his plans for him. Like most of the workmen in the shop of Demetrius, he had come to believe that the man now sitting beside him in the dark, was little removed from one who is considered to be under the special protection of the gods. He believed Aratus to be half insane—more than half insane when there was question of Andros. He had long known of the hatred arising from the rivalry, and he determined to use it for his own purposes.

He did not speak again for some time, in order to let the information he had given sink deeply into the mind of Aratus. It was with an assumed nonchalance that he presently asked:

"Art thou not rejoiced now that thou gavest into my care the deadly potion? Thou wilt not have murder to answer for to the pro-consul."

"I am in doubt whether I acted wisely in

letting thee have it," replied Aratus. "Perhaps after all its use will be a surer and a quicker way to rid ourselves of him. What thinkest thou?"

"If thou stir up the priests, and point out to them that their reward will be the fisheries in the northern lakes, and all his sailing vessels, and perhaps some well-filled coffers in his house, thou wilt have little else to do. But in case they do not move fast enough to suit my hate—well—I will carefully keep the witch's vial. It may be useful yet."

CHAPTER XIX

"TO WHOM SHALL I GO?"

Andros, happily unconscious of the plottings of his enemies, thought frequently of the conversations he had enjoyed with Elymas. He pondered deeply and long over them, argued with himself, sifted and probed. He was not one of those light characters caught by a passing fancy. He desired to know the reason of all things, and told himself that if the tenets proposed by Elymas were found to be contrary to reason he would reject them and cease his visits, which would be something that he would regret, for he had grown very fond of the family.

He did not find this opposition to reason, but instead there arose in his soul a great desire to learn more of the deity whom Elymas so frequently mentioned and whom he felt sure was neither the national goddess of the Ephesians, nor Zeus of the Greeks, nor Jupiter of the Romans. The attributing of human qualities, and often of human vices, to these deities was something which was altogether repulsive to him. He longed and looked for a higher and purer and more ideal worship. The falsehoods attributed to Mercury, the inebriety of Bacchus, the libidi-

nousness practiced in the cultus of his Asiatic deity, in his calmer and higher moods, when his mind was unruffled, disgusted him, and although at one time or another he had given way to one or other of these universal customs, yet the better and nobler part of him had always rebelled against the excesses as soon as his more rational judgment asserted itself.

Andros had grown very fond of Elymas and his wife Joanna. In his frequent visits he had become well acquainted with David and Gedeliah, and these two boys and their sisters, Esther and Hannah, had come to look upon him almost as a brother. Joanna treated him in a specially motherly fashion which he keenly appreciated. He gave her much of his confidence. Long before the summer had waned he had poured into her sympathetic ear the story of his love for Lydda. After some judicious questions by which she satisfied herself as to the character and disposition of Lydda, which a lover's ardor had unconsciously yet absurdly colored, and for which she, in her motherly wisdom, had made due allowance, she encouraged him to press his suit.

"If she is worthy of thee, Andros, she must in time acknowledge the ardor of thy love," she said.

"Worthy! She is a divinity! Worthy! Oh! Joanna, I shall never be worthy of her."

"Nevertheless, do thou try to win her."

"Thou art truly kind. I would that she knew thee. Thou hast been almost a mother to me since thou didst shelter me when my life was in danger."

Joanna had certainly grown very fond of him. She was tempted to tell him some very interesting things, but she refrained, realizing the time was not yet ripe for any disclosures.

The evening meal was served and partaken of with that usual joyous yet gentle hilarity which so frequently charmed Andros and brought him again and again to the house for the pleasure of witnessing and participating in it.

When the repast was finished Elymas and Andros repaired to the western veranda of the house to watch the glories of the setting sun. From their elevated position on the southwestern slope of Mount Coressus they looked over a beautiful country toward the sea. Vineyards and meadows, fields of waving corn and here and there a cluster of forest trees, checkered and diversified the landscape, beautified by the golden haze of the setting sun. Long the two friends sat in the splendor of the evening light, fairly intoxicated with its delights.

The short Asiatic twilight came at length and was quickly followed by a star-lit night even more beautiful than the dying day. The two sat in quiet contemplation. The thoughts of both were, at that hour, too solemnly

beautiful to be marred by the inconsequent chatter of friendship.

Elymas grew more solemn and thoughtful as the minutes passed. He was revolving some great project in his mind. He had long learned to love this bright young Ephesian and sincerely wished him well. He was debating within himself whether this was a propitious occasion to unfold to his young friend at least a part of his own belief. Several times he was on the point of speaking, and then thought better of it and remained silent. At last he decided he would speak.

"Thou hast known me for some months," he began, "and thou must have perceived that we are not of thy race."

"That I know full well," answered Andros, "but thou hast been a good friend to me. Tell me, I pray, the secret of thy kindness."

"Of that anon. Thou hast observed that we worship not Diana, nor any of the gods."

"That I have perceived long since. At first I wondered at this. Thou hast neither shrine nor waxen image of an ancestor."

"I will unfold to thee the reason. My friendship for thee and the desire I have to do thee good make me take this risk. We have a higher, purer, and a holier religion than thou hast ever known. If thou wilt but accept it, it will satisfy all the nobler cravings of thine unsatisfied soul. Thou knowest, from thine own experience, that thou art not happy in thy present unsettled state of mind.

An intellect such as thou possessest can never be satisfied with less than the worship of the true God. Tell me plainly—one who wishes thee nought but good—speak from thine inmost heart and say that thou dost not in reality accept thine Asian Diana as a real divinity."

The request was startling to Andros, the more so as his doubts and difficulties on the subject had recently grown stronger in proportion as he had allowed his thought to dwell thereon. His recent cogitations, his bitter disappointment at the raising of the parapetasma in the temple, his and Lydda's disappointment in their hope of a return to saner and more ideal conditions in the worship of the goddess, and, above all, the inward consciousness that the orgies which accompanied the worship were far beneath the dignity of a human intelligence, which he realized had something godlike in it, all conspired to make the statement of Elymas bear the impress of truth.

He realized the disinterestedness of the speaker at his side. He remembered how he had saved his life and put his pursuers off the scent, and how he had refused all compensation. The kindly welcome he received on his now frequent visits many times convinced him of the true nature of Elymas' tried friendship. He felt at this moment, out under the solemn stars, that his friend was about to offer him some substantial benefit.

He knew not what it was to be, but never did he doubt the ingenuousness of his friend's intentions.

And yet, to make the admission was, in a sense, to denationalize himself, to declare himself a renegade from the faith of his ancestors. Should he admit the statement proposed to him he believed that it meant social ostracism, for he was too earnest a character to do anything by halves. His heart prompted him to admit the supposition, his inclinations and his life's habits were equally urgent in demanding a repulse.

"Were I to admit that," he replied, at length, "all the beauty and all the joy would vanish from my life. Degraded as is the worship of Diana at present, those who can look beyond the sensuous veil can see the æsthetic and the beautiful in it."

"But, dear friend, granting this to be true for the chosen few, can the mere love of the beautiful satisfy the human soul? Use your reason. Can a worship which fosters licentiousness, deifies the vices, and laughs at crime, be of divine origin? You know that it cannot. Then, if that be so, the deity which you have worshipped ignorantly in your youth—must be false."

"But where shall I go?" said Andros, with a certain amount of agony in his voice which the new thoughts had engendered. "I must acknowledge a supreme being of some kind. My very nature—all human nature—calls

aloud for it. If Diana be false—if—" He stopped suddenly. The influx of many new thoughts rendered him speechless.

After what he considered a sufficient pause, Elymas said solemnly:

"Andros, didst thou ever, on some such beautiful night as this, watch the stars in their courses? Hast thou ever considered their orderly and varied movements? Canst thou explain the never-failing order of the succession of night and day? Is it not a mystery to thee that, year after year, with never failing regularity, the trees bud forth and leaf and blossom and bear fruit, and then, when summer is gone, lose their foliage; and all this with a regularity and order that never varies with the succeeding years? Hath it never impressed thee that one kind of tree always bears the same kind of fruit, and another a different kind, with unceasing fidelity? Thou wouldst laugh at me as one demented were I to attempt to gather grapes from the elms that support the vines."

"I certainly should, good Elymas."

"But dost thou not see there is order and design in all this? Where there are these two qualities, which thou must admit belong only to intelligent beings, there must be a personal power directing nature. Thou wilt admit that none but a God could create this universe. Thou, or any other human being, as thou knowest, couldst not create a blade of grass. If, then, as shown by order and

design, there is a personality in the creator, this creator must be a personal God."

"That I see," admitted Andros thoughtfully.

"That personal God, whom thou grantest hath created all things, must then be infinite."

"Yes, the creator of all things must be infinite."

"Then, to be logical, thou must admit that as he is infinite, there can be but one God, for dost thou not perceive that it would be a contradiction, by the very meaning of the word, to admit two infinite beings? Is it not clear to thee that Zeus, or Diana, or any other god or goddess cannot have real existence? Admit now, my friend, that thou canst no longer say that Diana is a real divinity."

"But to whom, then, shall I go?" asked Andros, as he stretched out his arms in an imploring and somewhat pathetic manner.

"To that personal infinite God who rules the universe," answered Elymas.

"Will he satisfy me? Will he, can he, rise to my ideal of the beautiful? I confess to thee that Diana has fallen far short of this."

"The God whom I worship, Andros, is all beautiful. Thou hast seen and canst appreciate the beauties of this wonderful earth of ours. Could mortal finger paint those clouds we have just seen aglow with living colors? Can the artist paint the rainbow, or blend its tints in such perfection as we see in nature?

Who can create the liquid notes of the nightingale? Can mortal man fashion the petals of the rose or produce the beauty of the delicate lily? Spreadest thou the purple haze on the evening hills? What more brilliantly beautiful than the sun at noon save, perhaps, the silver sheen of the skies at night in their softened beauty? Who giveth lustre to the silver shining moon? Why do we admire bravery and courage and honor? Are they not reflections of that divine beauty residing in God? Yes, Andros, thou shalt find in the only true God all the beauty thy soul craves. Thou wilt grant that the world with all its beauty could not have created itself, for thou seest that then it would be acting before existing. Some power must have made it. No one can give that which he does not possess. Therefore, is it not clear that the giver of all this beauty to the earth must himself be beautiful, and even surpass thy ideals of beauty?"

"Say no more, good Elymas; thou persuadest me to accept thy God."

"May the God thou acceptest bless thee. He shall fill thy heart with love. Ah! why that impatient shrug of the shoulders? Thou art thinking of thy Lydda. His love in thee shall exist side by side with that human love he hath given thee. There is room in thy heart for both."

"I feared I should have to relinquish my love for her for whom I would die."

"Not so. That human love in thy heart is given thee by God. Cultivate it to thy heart's desire, and may the God who implanted it in thy breast bless thee in it."

"I would hear more about this great God of thine," said Andros.

Elymas judged that he had told the young man sufficient for one time. He would let him ponder well over what he had already learned before going further.

"Seest thou how low the evening star has declined? Come again as soon as thou findest it convenient, for I have many things to tell thee."

CHAPTER XX

SHORT OF HIS DESIRE

The exquisite odor of numberless roses perfumed the still, summer atmosphere of the peristyle of the house of Mellanides. They were everywhere in the open court. Between the marble columns blossom-bearing bushes in boxes had been arranged. On the pavement slaves had scattered many armfuls in lavish profusion. In every available corner tall vases held rarest specimens. Large branches of the climbing varieties, in the glory of full bloom, were twined around the marble columns. The peristyle, with its Ionic columns of severe architecture, was a riot of color.

Mellanides was especially fond of this particular flower and of its distinctive odor. As Lydda had expressed the delight that roses afforded her, the old warrior had given orders to the slaves that she was to be abundantly supplied from the rose gardens whenever she desired.

A few days after the meeting of Andros and Elymas, Lydda occupied her favorite marble bench at the head of the short flight of steps that led down to the waters of the impluvium. She was fairly embowered in

blossoms. More beautiful than even the roses, she presented an entrancing picture of feminine grace and loveliness as she half reclined on the marble bench, her feet on a footstool, and her long, tapering fingers clasped around her knees. She appeared, however, preoccupied and rather ill at ease and restless. Occasionally she would take up the chelys, or tortoise-shell lyre, and pick a soft, sweet air on the instrument, or strike a bolder chord. She soon tired of this, and sent an attendant for the phorminx and plectrum, on which she was no mean performer. But on this afternoon she did not seem able to concentrate her attention on the larger lyre, or upon any particular occupation or amusement.

That day she had suffered more annoyance than usual from the attentions of Aratus, who, as his financial condition reached the lowest ebb, became more importunate in urging his suit. Before this time, and again to-day, Lydda had told him that she could never give him her hand, and for the most elementary of all reasons—she did not love him. This reiterated declaration appeared to have the effect of causing him to become more importunate. This afternoon his manner of urging his suit had approached to a species of ferocity.

To add to her vexation, Andros, on whom she much relied, had not visited her villa for several days. She knew not the reason of

his absence, and he, at present, had no intention of telling her of his preoccupation of mind on account of the new thoughts Elymas had given him, and which were in reality epochal for him. Her father was old. Every day he was becoming more feeble and less able to protect her against the unwelcome attentions of Aratus.

At times, when she allowed herself the luxury of day-dreaming, she would come out of one with a frightened expression on her face. What if Aratus, in the ardor of his wooing, should attempt to carry her off by force or strategy, and compel her to become his wife! That very day he had sworn by all the gods that he would, in the end, make her his wife, and compel her love. That should never be, she told herself. She would love him alone whom she freely chose to love. Violence might be used to carry her away, but she would never bestow her hand except by her own free choice.

It was not very surprising that Lydda should be somewhat afraid for her safety. The peristyle around the impluvium was open at one end, and she lived here out-of-doors the greater part of each day. The steps at the farthest end of the court led down to the lawn, and the river Caystrus was not far away. The wall that enclosed the house and garden could be easily scaled, or one of the scores of slaves be bribed to leave one of the gates unlocked. Access was, there-

fore, easy to the peristyle and to the rooms of the mansion. Her father could be silenced without difficulty. Two men, or three, would find it no great labor to abduct her, if they were determined of purpose. Her slaves? She could not be sure that they were or would remain faithful where, of a surety, plenty of gold would reward their complicity.

She thought so long on such a possibility as this that she worked herself into a nervous condition bordering on tears and hysteria, realizing, or at least imagining, that amid all her luxury and unlimited wealth, she was much alone and without a real protector.

It was a relief to her at this juncture when the steward announced the arrival of Andros. She ran impulsively to the door leading from the atrium to greet him.

"Oh, I am so glad—so glad that thou hast come at last! Truant! where wert thou these many days? Doth the house of Mellanides no longer offer attractions for thee?"

Andros' heart-beats quickened at this salutation. Not being aware of the highly wrought state of her feelings, he not unnaturally thought—the wish being father to the thought—that the warmth of greeting was on his account.

"The house of Mellanides offereth the only attraction in all Asia."

" 'Twas not a very strong lode-stone which could not draw thee here these many days."

"Had I but known that thou desiredst me to come, I would have flown hither on the wings of the wind."

"Oh, I have felt so lonesome—lonesome—without thee! I have all kinds of fears when thou art away. I am very fearful."

"Would that I could always stay with thee to drive such thoughts away! What hast thou, daughter of the warrior Mellanides, to fear?"

"Oh, fearful thoughts! There! I will not tell thee now, but rather rejoice in thy coming. Why hast thou been so long away? Where hast thou been and what hast thou done? Come, sit here amid the roses. Are they not beautiful—earth's gifts to the sun? The slaves bring me large armfuls every day. Which wilt thou have, my Andros? Red—red for love! Yellow for the gold of goodness. White—what does white represent? White for death! Eugh! I want not white. Which wilt thou choose?"

Andros selected from the profusion of blooms a deep red blossom and gave the girl at his side a similar one, in which she nervously buried her face, as if to calm her excitement by its delicious perfume. He saw that the mistress of the villa, who was noted among her acquaintances for her Juno-like calmness, was now laboring under the effect of some stress of excitement. Her speech at

times seemed scarcely under her control. She talked rapidly, and occasionally almost incoherently, as if making an effort to hide some secret.

"Lydda, thou art not thyself to-day," began Andros.

"Yes, yes, yes, I am! I am myself. There is nothing the matter with me. Art thou free from danger? Listen! Hearest thou that peacock's screech? 'Tis a portent of evil for some one. Does it not sound ominous? Eugh! I will have them all killed. Ho, steward—," and she shivered nervously.

"Wait, dear lady," persuaded Andros, "act not rashly. 'Tis said their screech betokeneth nothing worse than rain. Do not do away with the beautiful creatures. There! See that one on the low parapet yonder. How gorgeously he spreadeth his many-hued feathers! Is he not clothed in magnificent attire?"

"Juno's birds! No, I will not kill them. They are too beautiful. Nothing beautiful ought to die. Nothing should die!"

"Then thou wert immortal, fair one! Art thou ill, Lydda?"

"No, no. I am well. Why dost thou ask?"

"Is thy father well?"

"He groweth very old. Oh, death, cold, dark death, will come to him ere long."

She shuddered. Turning suddenly to Andros, she asked:

"Andros, promise me that thou wilt inurn his ashes in the costliest urn thou canst procure. Promise! Promise!"

"Let us not talk on this. May he live long years yet."

"Yes, yes. He shall. He must. He is beautiful to me. Beautiful things must not die."

"Then, I repeat, thou oughtest to be immortal, for no one living is more beautiful than thou."

"A pretty compliment! Where hast thou learned such courteous phrases? Not among the men who man thy ships or catch thy fish for thee."

"I caught them most from thee, my preceptress, or at least thou art their inspiration."

"Am I an inspiration to thee, Andros?"

"Indeed thou art. Thou art ever in my thoughts. Thou art a guide for all my actions. What wouldst thou say, fair lady, if a new god were to tell thee that human love was one of his best gifts to mortals?"

"This new god would tell us nothing new," she replied.

"Yet some people seriously doubt it. There are so many uncertainties and pangs in love."

"They are wrong—wrong, Andros. Love is true. Love is noble. Love is real. 'Tis

woman's glory—the real nobility of man. How can there be doubt concerning mortal love? If love be true, thy god, whether he be new or old, must be more of a god in giving than in withholding it. No religion which is true would in any way antagonize it, but would rather develop and elevate it."

The lover was surprised to hear such sentiments pass the lips of Lydda. For the pleasure of hearing her talk he said:

"What if thou findest me a skeptic?"

"Then, dear friend, I would be thy teacher. I would show thy skepticism to be impossible while men and women have hearts that beat and minds that know and souls that can appreciate goodness. This is what it is to a woman who loves. This is what thou shalt find when thou discoverest the woman that loves thee. He is the life of her life, her joy, her recompense. For him she thinks, speaks, moves, breathes! He is to her her all, her very life. She is the clinging vine, he the sturdy oak to which she looks for support and strength. All her thoughts are of him; her affections, even to pain, she surrenders to him. Let her love be trifled with, and woman becomes a very human tigress. Such is love in woman, O Andros. How canst thou doubt of its truth, its reality?"

Her enthusiasm had flushed her face, which was more lovely than ever under the stimulus of her own speech. She was panting a little from excitement, and as she

leaned back on the bench, Andros thought that she never had looked more beautiful. Through very delight he maintained the attitude of the skeptic.

"Thy disciple is still unconvinced. Such qualities as thou portrayest belong to the gods rather than to mortals."

"I tell thee," replied Lydda, very earnestly, "thou dost not know a woman's heart. When she loves, all the energies and powers of her soul go with it. He whom she loves is her sun, her light, the guide of her life! To him she is devoted in a way that even the object of her love is incapable of realizing. Every pulse of her heart, every thought of her mind is for him. He possesses, controls, dominates her. Such is true love of a woman for a man. If there be a true god, or one of whom I have never heard, whose priests teach this doctrine of human love as well as divine love, I am ready to accept that divinity, for this is truth."

"I have heard it said that love is one of the most benign of gifts," said Andros, as Lydda paused. He was thinking of that sentence of Elymas which gave him so much consolation and which he repeated to himself many times a day. With the frequent repetition had come the consoling conclusion that in some way or another, at present obscure to him, his own love affair would end happily. He could not explain why this feeling came to him, yet the conviction had

grown stronger day by day ever since he had declared himself willing to accept the one true God. A change was manifest in him. He had grown more gentle, more kindly to all. There was a softer word on his lips now. The glance of his eye was more sympathetic toward suffering and want.

"Benign!" said Lydda. "Of course it is benign. It is godlike. No greater blessing comes from the gods to mortals."

"What dost thou imagine should be the qualities of the man who loves?" he asked.

"Oh, Andros, how can I answer? I know not a man's heart. I can only describe a woman's, and what I know she is capable of when she truly loves."

"Come, pretty one, tell me what qualities thou thinkest should be in him who would call himself a lover. I would like to know a woman's view, and in that mirror examine mine own shortcomings."

"I cannot catalogue a man's virtues," said Lydda, slowly, with a sudden and unaccountable shyness. She began pulling to pieces the petals of a crimson rose and scattering them. Her former maidenly reserve appeared again suddenly to enwrap her. In a few minutes she was the Lydda of an hour before, poised and exteriorly unemotional.

Andros sat near her in silence for some time, amusedly watching her pluck to pieces one rose after another. He used all his persuasiveness to induce Lydda to picture the

qualities of an ideal lover. His efforts were of no avail, for she seemed no longer to care to discuss the subject. After repeated unsuccessful attempts, he attributed his failure to the emotional fickleness of woman's nature, a quality which, he mentally remarked, she had not enumerated.

When Andros had departed, after the evening meal, Lydda regretted that she had not made known to him her fears with regard to the possible violence from Aratus, and his increasing assertiveness. That which now caused her blushes of mortification was the remembrance of the freedom with which she had spoken of love. Had he read in her impassioned sentences the secret of her heart? She had confided this secret to no one but the matronly woman of the large house on the other side of the Caystrus. From the time of her first visit a friendship had sprung up, and she had often gone across the river since the accident. She had learned to love and confide in her who presided over the household.

As children, she and Andros had been playmates together. Now, in her full bloom and beauty of womanhood, there was no other person who so filled her mind as he did. She admired his manly character and sturdy, developing manhood as the years slipped by in rapid succession. In reality, for a long time she had been deeply in love with the friend of her childhood. He was her stand-

ard of manly excellence, but his reticence had forced upon her a reserve of manner which she longed to have opportunity to let drop away.

In this conversation she suddenly realized that she was probably showing her own heart too openly. When Andros had asked her to describe a male lover she was aware, had she attempted the task, he would have recognized himself in the picture. Hence, in order not to betray herself, her sudden change of manner to shyness and an appearance of indifference and even coldness.

Andros was puzzled but not discouraged. He regarded this shyness as a distinctly favorable omen. He resolved that on the occasion of his next visit to the villa he would venture all and ask her hand in marriage, but many strange happenings were to come to pass before they met again.

CHAPTER XXI

WINNING A FRIEND

Although Andros had not mentioned his new belief in the one God to Lydda, owing to the excited state in which he had found her, yet he had gone to the mansion for that express purpose. He saw that it would be impossible and worse than useless to introduce so grave a subject when her mind was so evidently perturbed over something the nature of which he had not the remotest idea. He resolved to see her again at the first opportunity and propound to her the great thoughts and ideas he had learned from Elymas. His new faith was daily growing and taking a stronger vitalizing hold upon him.

With the knowledge already acquired, he saw plainly that of necessity his old habits and ways of thinking would in time drop away from him. He found no difficulty in renouncing the public worship of Diana. This had long disgusted him by its attendant licentiousness, although the pageantry of the ritual processions had pleased his love of color and display. With the domestic habits of his daily life he was to find more difficulty. The habits of a lifetime are not overcome in

an hour, nor are lifelong customs dropped without a struggle.

To the amazement of the slaves of his household, he relegated a beautiful shrine, the chief ornament of his own living-room, to an unused room at the top of his house. One by one the various symbols of the worship of the goddess as Diana, or Hecate, or Luna or Magos, which, as works of art, were adornments of his walls, were quietly removed, and, if not unostentatiously destroyed, were sold.

His acceptance of the belief in the One God had been complete and entire. He had seen the force and had accepted the teachings of Elymas. For years he had cultivated the society of those philosophers who frequently wandered from Athens to Ephesus. His choice of reading had been of the more solid kind in preference to the light, frivolous romances for which Ephesus was so famous in his day. He was, consequently, in a better mental condition to be able to grasp readily a teaching founded more on abstract reasoning than on imagination, or that which appealed merely to the senses.

The satisfaction he experienced in knowing that if he accepted the new God proposed to him by Elymas he would not be required to relinquish his love for Lydda was intense. He repeated to himself over and over again the words of Elymas, "Human love is a benign gift of God to man. Cultivate it to thy

heart's desire, and may the God who gave it to thee, bless thee in it."

This advice, probably more than any other cause, disposed him to listen with docility, and to accept other and higher doctrines when he again visited Elymas.

In the meantime he passed through a phase of mental perturbation which caused him no little trouble. He remembered that in the workshop of Demetrius there was awaiting him a silver shrine of the goddess Diana, intended by him as a present to Lydda on her next birthday. He saw clearly that if he accepted the worship of the one true God he could no longer buy, have, or give to another an image of a false god. This was evident and clear to his upright mind. What should he do? A thought came to him to present it to her as a work of art merely, abstracting from its religious signification; but he was of too thorough and manly a character to adopt such a subterfuge. The work on the shrine was already completed. In a few days Demetrius and his workmen expected to carry it, as was customary, in procession through the streets to the villa of Mellanides, and with due ceremonies place it in position.

He wended his way, puzzled and thoughtful, to the silversmith's, undecided what to do until he had reached Demetrius' garden.

"May Diana prosper thee, noble Andros," said Demetrius, who was standing at the

door of his workshop. He was now as obsequious as once he had been aggressive.

"And mayest thou enjoy length of days," said Andros in answer to the salutation.

"Come inside, generous patron of the arts, and view the artistic triumph of thy shrine. It is now all but completed. On the third day from now I intend to give my artists a holiday, when the shrine shall be conveyed in solemn procession to the house of Lydda. Knoweth she yet the great joy of possession of so beautiful a piece of workmanship is to be hers?"

"Nay, good silversmith, I have not yet informed her. I had intended it as a surprise."

"Had intended! Had intended! What meanest thou? Doth not the workmanship please thee? Come, look at the statue! All Greece cannot show a fairer specimen of the silversmith's handicraft! Seest thou that crenallated towered crown—that poise of head? It is perfection. Seest thou the gracefulness of that antlered hind which the goddess holds? You almost expect to see it move and try to escape! Look, friend, at the arrows. How delicate the carving of each feather, and see the quiver at her back! The statues in the temple are vulgar compared to this one, O Andros! Look at those miniature Ionic pillars of the temple, which style of architecture, as thou knowest, was

especially invented for our temple. Surely thou art satisfied with the workmanship?"

"More than satisfied," answered Andros, "the artistic excellence could not be surpassed by Scopas or Praxiteles."

"Good! It is a pleasure to work for one who can appreciate true excellence in art. Now I know why thou refusedst, during the Artemision, to shout in honor of the great statue in the temple. The ancient statue was not artistic enough for thee. When wilt thou have the shrine removed? I will have it weighed before thee now, although I know that one so wealthy as thou art will not be particular as to a few ounces. Thou knowest thou wert to pay me one-third of the weight in silver for the cost of workmanship. For such excellence that is cheap, indeed."

"I will give thee twenty ounces of silver above our bargain for the excellence of thy labor, but I want it not taken to the house of Mellanides," said Andros.

"Not taken there! Am I to have no glory? Art thou dissatisfied with it? 'Twas but a moment ago thou didst praise it. Is there aught about it that displeaseth thee? No rules of mine art have I violated."

"No, no. It is beautiful—beautiful, indeed."

"And thou wantest it not for thy lady? Ah, Aratus hath succeeded and thou hast failed?"

Andros' face flushed angrily at the men-

tion, in such a connection, of his rival's name.

"No. If thou wishest to retain my friendship, mention not that name again."

"But the reason, then, that thou—"

"I have changed my mind. That is all. I am willing and able to pay thee well for thy labor. From this silver I desire something of thee that will please the daughter of Mellanides better."

"Better than a shrine of our goddess! Nothing can suit a woman better than that, provided the metal be precious enough."

"Hath she not a number of shrines in her house?"

"But nothing approaching the beauty of this one, of a surety."

"Get thyself invited, and visit her rooms sometime, Demetrius, and see for thyself."

"What wilt thou then?" asked the silversmith, in no good humor.

"That thou meltest this silver once again and from it make two tall vases of thy choicest skill. I will pay thee one-third of the weight of the shrine in silver for the work thou hast already done, and am willing to pay thee even more, if thou demandest it, if thou wilt but make the vases according to my wish."

"Do as he desireth, master, but do it quickly, or thou wilt not have opportunity to recompense thyself."

This advice came unexpectedly, in a hoarse whisper, from the deformed dwarf of the

furnace, who had pulled Demetrius' tunic from behind. He spoke in so low a tone that Andros did not hear. Demetrius was slightly in awe of this man at the forge, believing in some way that he possessed some occult powers over nature and men. His uncanny appearance helped to foster this belief. The whispered warning had its effect. The silversmith, without turning around towards the dwarf, nodded affirmatively that he understood.

"I cannot make thee out, O Andros," said Demetrius. "This shrine which thou hast ordered hath taken months of labor. Thou sayest that it is a thing of beauty, and now thou desirest that it be sent to the melting pot again. One would think thou hadst forsaken thy goddess. Dost thou remember I thought so once before?"

"Take it as an unexplained whim of one who is able to pay for his vagaries. If thou wilt make what I desire of thee, I will even pay thee half the weight of them in silver."

The offer was a good one. Demetrius, ever with an eye to a bargain, let his renown as an artist stand in abeyance, and lost no time in closing it. Curses from the furnace corner followed Andros as he, with Demetrius, walked to the far end of the workshop, where a little weazened old man sat behind a table and received minute instructions as to the shape and ornaments of the vases.

When the detailed instructions had all

been carefully written down, Andros strolled among the artists, here and there leaving his customary dole for wine.

Arriving at the door by which he had entered the workshop from the garden, Andros for the first time realized that he had habitually neglected and apparently ignored the bellows-blower.

Conscious that he had not done this deliberately, and regretting that hitherto he had overlooked the man, he was curious to learn how his oversight had affected him. Andros did not blame himself, for the man at the furnace while at work was generally hidden behind a door, the furnace being placed in a corner of the shop. One leaf of the door generally hid him from the view of those passing in and out.

"Health to thee, Nitros. Wilt thou pardon me that I have never asked thee to drink my health in wine?"

A savage growl, scarcely human, came from the deep chest of the dwarf. Had looks the power to kill, Andros would have dropped dead, so intense was the malice that shone from his sunken eyes beneath the beetling brows.

"Thou art partly to blame," continued Andros, good-naturedly, "because thou so persistently hidest thyself behind the great door."

"Small care or concern hath such as thou, with health, wealth and friends, for a mis-

shapen thing such as I. Is not the sight of me a shadow on thy path of joy? or do not my squalor and deformity add brightness to thy life by the very contrasts of our conditions?" said the dwarf, with savage bitterness.

"Indeed, not so," said Andros earnestly. "I pity thee thy sad deformity! May the gods—hm!—May not the Roman physician of the pro-consul help to cure thee of thy ills? 'Tis said that he hath performed wonders."

"That is right! Mock! mock! I am helpless, as thou knowest, to avenge myself! Do thou wait! Thy tauntings shall not go unavenged! Beware for thyself."

"Be not so angry," said the shipowner, quite at a loss to imagine why the man was so vindictive. "I will do thee good, if thou wilt permit it. I know not why thou art so angry with me, except that I have neglected thee on my visits here. This, as I have explained, was inadvertence. Now listen to me, friend Nitros."

"I am listening. What hast thou to say? Like the rest of men, I suppose, scoffings at my deformed figure. If the immortal gods made me thus, is it just that mortals always thrust the third finger out at me, and make my life a torture? Do men think that I have no human feelings left?"

Andros gazed at the misshapen man, and felt in some way that he was rightly re-

proved. With an impulse of regret for his former neglect, he said:

"I know thou hast. I pity thee thy misfortune. Bare pity is a slow solace. This is what I propose. Thou art above the mere labor of bellows-blowing. Thou knowest that I employ many men. Wilt thou not come to me? I want a strong, faithful man in my house to guard my treasure-chest, which is none too safe from some of my slaves when I am absent. Wilt thou come? Thy labor shall be light and honorable, and —I trust thee."

Andros, as he spoke, watched the play of emotions on the swarthy and begrimed face of the dwarf. At first there appeared to be no intelligent light in his eyes. Then came a gleam as he realized the proposition, followed by a look of distrustful doubt. Then hesitancy, as if the offer were too good to be true. This was followed by a burst of anger which momentarily blazed out of those piercing eyes. It was calmed, evidently, by the recollection of the last three words which Andros had spoken.

"Thou trusteth me! me! It is impossible!" he said as one bewildered.

"Why so, my friend? Have I not known that thou hast been faithful to Demetrius, thy master, these many years? If thou art true to one master, wilt thou not be true to another?"

"Oh, but I have wronged thee. I hated thee. I sought to do thee harm!"

"I am sorry for that, because I never harmed thee. Thou canst undo that by being faithful to me in the new office I offer thee. Wilt thou come?"

Nitros paused for some seconds, and then answered:

"Yes, I will come with thee."

The young Ephesian felt for his purse with the intention of giving him some coins, but thought better of it. He was good enough character reader to know that in the circumstances it would be a more delicate compliment not to offer money.

"I am glad that thou wilt come," he said simply. "Thou knowest my house. I shall expect thee to-morrow."

As the speaker walked away, the dwarf followed him with his eyes. He was a completely changed man. Even Demetrius, who treated his men with consideration, always regarded Nitros as little more than a mere machine. Those who were familiar with the keeper of the forge would have been surprised had they watched him at this moment. For the first time he had been regarded as a human being with a will and powers of his own. For the first time in his life was he spoken to by a man as to a man. And, then, the joy at the thought of freedom from drudgery and hard and repulsive physical labor! To be a trusted agent with re-

sponsibility! The transformation in him was wonderful. Already he appeared taller and less deformed. He was now a man, trusted, honored! He watched Andros until he was out of sight. He turned to his idle bellows and began blowing the fire vigorously. The creakings of the leather folds of the great bellows drowned out his words.

"Oh, if Aratus has not begun his work of vengeance against this man! I must stop him at all costs, even if—"

He did not finish the sentence, but threw on his brown cloak and hastened to the wine-shop where he believed Aratus could be found at that hour.

CHAPTER XXII

THE FAME OF THE MASTER

The next time that Andros went out to the family of Elymas he was greatly surprised at what he saw. In all his previous visits he had experienced the delights of rural calm. The attractive charm to Andros had always been the peace that reigned in the household and the surrounding quiet of a rural home. On this occasion more people were gathered here than he had ever seen before. There was an unwonted stir.

All appeared to be laboring under some suppressed excitement, which was shown in sparkling eyes and flushed faces. Men and women passed hastily from room to room and in and out of the house in a preoccupied manner. Here and there in the garden were little knots of men or women, or sometimes of both, busily discussing something of importance. Others came to the farmhouse, stayed a few minutes and then hurried away.

Andros, being unknown to all save the family of Elymas, considered himself on this occasion to be in the way. He decided to leave quietly and return some other day when the excitement should have passed.

He was about to depart, having gone down the garden some paces, when Elymas hastily approached him.

"Thou art not deserting us, Andros? We will not let thee go. Thou dost not understand why so many friends are gathered here to-day. I will explain all to thee later. They will not remain long. Many have already gone. Thou art welcome as ever, but thou seest I have the duties of hospitality to attend to. I know thou wilt excuse me for a short time. Abdiel hath returned, and greatly desires to see thee. He is engaged at present, but I will send my son David to thee. Many of these people know who thou art and feel kindly towards thee."

Andros could but accept the graceful explanation. In a few minutes David came to entertain him. The young man, believing that Andros was a neophyte, or was about to become one, and not knowing to what extent he had as yet been instructed, refrained as much as possible from discussing religious topics, deeming it more prudent to leave such important matters to those more experienced. Previously kindly disposed towards each other, the two soon became fast and confidential friends.

Andros was quick to see that this young man was reluctant to talk on religious subjects, and he therefore refrained from introducing them, although he had many questions to be answered.

"It ill becomes a youth," said David, "to discuss these high subjects when one's elders —men of experience—are within call."

"Thy father is busy to-day with his guests?"

"Abdiel will soon come to thee."

"Who is Abdiel? What is he?" asked Andros, who for some time had been curious to know why every one of the family spoke of and treated him with the greatest respect and reverence.

"Dost thou not know? He is the priest of our religion."

"Is that the reason why all of you hold him in so much veneration?"

"Most assuredly, for at present none but he in all Ephesus can dispense to us our mysteries."

"What are thy mysteries?"

"Wait until he cometh to thee. He will explain all to thee, if he find thee worthy."

The master-fisherman did not urge an explanation. He rather respected the young man's retiring disposition and modesty of demeanor. They soon found common ground upon which they could converse and exchange confidences to their hearts' content. It was the universal subject. During their talk Andros told his friend of his love for Lydda and all his hopes. As confidence begets confidence, he learned that David's affections were centered upon a young woman living in a little community in the

woods on the north side of the river Caystrus.

"I know of those people!" exclaimed Andros. "My Lydda told me that once she met with an accident near their house. They treated her as a sister. She often speaks of them. They live not far from her father's house."

"I almost envy thee," said David, laughing in such a way as to show that that vice had not any hold on him.

"Why? How so?"

"When thou shalt marry thy Lydda, thine own and her wealth will make thee one of the very richest men in Ephesus, while I, if I am fortunate enough to secure the hand of her whom I love, shall have to work hard all the days of my life. I say I almost envy thee, and probably should do so did not my religion forbid envy."

"Forbid envy! Doth thy religion influence thy private life? Thy very thoughts?"

"Unquestionably," replied David. "It enters and influences our inmost being. It dominates the whole man."

Andros remained silently thinking for some time. This new idea engrossed him. His mind, however, soon reverted to the thought which was at present uppermost. "If I marry Lydda! Ah, it is by no means certain as yet that I shall secure that happiness! David, I like thee much. I will look after thy interests if thou wilt trust me.

Come what may, I am influential enough to secure thee some lucrative position."

David thanked him and said he would remind him of his promise some time in the future.

By this time most of the gathering had dispersed. Abdiel came in search of Andros and David modestly withdrew.

"Elymas tells me that thou now believest in the one true God?" said Abdiel interrogatively.

"This I believe most firmly," replied Andros; "tell me what more I must do."

Seating themselves in the shade of a grape arbor, with the aroma of grape blossoms all around them, Abdiel began to unfold to him the sublime doctrines of the Holy Trinity and the Incarnation of the Son of God.

Long Andros listened with absorbed attention to the marvelous story of the fundamental truths of Christianity, fearing to interrupt by questioning lest he might miss any of the teachings of Abdiel. It was an epoch-making period for Andros, for his mental horizon was enlarged. He saw more of the meaning of life. His ideas expanded, and he was conscious that these doctrines supplied a realization of his long-cherished ideals, although the whole revelation was so different to what he could possibly have imagined. Henceforth he lived in a new world of thought and motive. One effect

was the birth of an incipient zeal. He wanted all Ephesus to know the great truths.

Stars studded the sky before Abdiel ceased speaking of the wonderful story of man's fall and his divine redemption.

"Explain to me, good sir, one thing," said Andros. "Why was it necessary that the divine Logos, after he had taken up, as thou sayest, our human nature into the divine, should needs have suffered?"

"Have I not already told thee, Andros, that he assumed our human nature in order that he might suffer for us? God, a pure spirit, could not suffer, but the offense of sin against God was infinite, and required a reparation of infinite merit, such only as God could offer. This reparation of the God-man—the only possible one that could prove adequate—was accepted by the Father, and the whole human race was redeemed thereby. Seest thou now the necessity of suffering on the part of the God-man—the only one capable of making reparation and of accomplishing the redemption?"

Andros assented, but put another question:

"Admitting the fact of an Incarnation, how can it be shown that this Christ is the divine one he claims to be?"

"This is shown by the prophecies concerning the Christ all having their fulfilment in him; by his own teaching and wonderfully holy life, and by the miracles which he per-

formed in proof of the truth of his doctrines and of his divinity."

"Thou sayest that this holy one hath come on earth in these our times. Didst thou ever see this divine one, Abdiel? Didst thou ever witness a miracle?"

The priest remained a long time without speaking. The question appeared to cause him great emotion. His lips trembled and his eyelids twitched as at some exciting remembrance. Andros was surprised, for their conversation had been quiet and grave and even-toned. He was at a loss to understand why so apparently simple a question should so affect his companion. It was some time before Abdiel regained his composure.

"Thou must pardon me my emotion, Andros. The mention and the remembrance of this great event of my life, when I first saw the Master, always affect me deeply. Wouldst thou hear the story?"

Andros signified his eagerness to hear.

"The dew begins to fall heavily. We will go into the house, and there I will tell thee."

When they were seated in the large living room, in the midst of the family of Elymas, Abdiel began his story:

"Thou must know that I am a native of Galilee, in the province of Syria. My father was a tiller of the soil. He brought up his family on a farm on the fruitful southern slope of Mount Carmel. I and my two brothers remained at home long after the

period which the rabbis declare that Jewish youths should marry. So long did I wait that I determined to stay with my parents as long as they lived, to look after them in their old age. In this providence disposed otherwise, and I am here. My two brothers are taking care of our parents.

"On one occasion several of my father's horses broke loose from their pasture grounds, and I was sent in search of them. I traveled south and east for two days. When the sun was within an hour of setting on the second day, I came to a small town not far from the southern confines of Galilee.

"There was much commotion in the one main street. I could hear the ululation and the shrill wailing of women. This told me that some one was recently dead, or that the body was being conveyed to the burial place. As I came nearer, I dismounted and tied my horse to a tree on the outskirts of the town and proceeded in the direction whence came the sounds of mourning.

"Soon I met the funeral procession. Never shall I forget the look of ineffable sorrow stamped upon the face of the woman. She was advanced in years. When her affliction came to her she was probably fifty years old. She did not appear to be well endowed with the riches of this world, for her garments were old and coarse, and she wore the long cloth over her head which is indicative of widowhood in our country. I enquired of

some sympathetic bystander whether she was engaged in the mournful task of consigning her husband to the grave.

"'No,' he answered, 'she performed that sad duty more than seven years ago. To-day she buries her only son. He was a good young man; now her only support is taken from her.'

"I noticed as the procession advanced nearly all the townspeople left their houses and either joined it or said a few kindly words of consolation to the weeping widow. I have seen much grief and suffering in my time, but never have I seen, O Andros, such unutterable woe as was depicted on that mother's face. Strong men wept at sight of her grief, which, as the procession neared the place of burial, appeared to grow more inconsolable. Moved to deep sympathy for the grief-stricken mother on account of the nature of her irreparable loss, I joined the cortege, determined, although I was a stranger to the townspeople, by my presence to show my sympathy for her in her bereavement.

"While we were wending our way slowly toward the place of sepulture the wailing of the townspeople and the shrill shrieks of the professional mourners grew louder. When these were at their height, I saw in the distance a large gathering of men and women approaching. They were accompanying one of a most majestic appearance. Had it

not been for his extreme dignity and noble carriage I should have paid no more than ordinary attention to him, regarding him as one of those itinerant teachers who of late years had been going up and down the country, especially in Galilee and Judea. Some of these had been excommunicated by the high priest and the Sanhedrim in Jerusalem. Others were allowed to go about unmolested, being considered harmless.

"This teacher possessed a dignity and a kingly bearing such as I had never before seen among men. When he spoke, all within sound of his voice hung with rapt attention on his words, compelled as it were by a force divine to acknowledge the power and eloquence that accompanied them. There were three of his companions to whom the crowd that pressed around them gave signal deference. These three were his special familiars and seemed to be possessed of some of his own power to draw men around them.

" 'See, Master,' I heard one of them say, 'here cometh a funeral train. Shall we step aside and let it pass? Shall I bid the throng that is following in our wake make room for the bier?'

"I heard not the reply from the Master, but saw him raise his hand in a commanding attitude. The musicians and those bearing the bier stood in wonder. There were some audible murmurs of disapproval among the townsmen at the stopping of the funeral

cortege. I looked toward the widowed mother, pitying her in her grief, and regretting that this interruption had occurred. Any untoward circumstance would be to her, in the future, when her memory would lovingly dwell on every detail of the burying of her beloved one, a further source of exquisite grief. She now seemed exhausted, as if her sorrow had reduced her to a state of numb despair. The kindly women who were with her watched her closely, fearing that she might faint from the excess of her anguish before the time of the final ordeal of leaving her only son a prey to the corruption of the sepulchre. The fountain of her tears was dried. She could weep no more. She appeared oblivious of her surroundings, enshrouded only in her sorrow.

"When the two gatherings—that of the townsmen, and those following the Master —came face to face, she stood passively, her hands clasped before her, her features partially hidden by the mourning veil, gazing at the form of her dead. The Master saw her tear-stained cheeks. He saw her form bent in anguish. He looked with pitying eyes on the magnitude of her sorrow, as boundless as the sea.

"When, without a word, by a single gesture, he halted the bier, his figure was regal. Never did a lordly general, leading his soldiers home from victory, look more commanding. A Cæsar himself could not be

more imperial than he was, standing before the bier of the dead young man. His fame as a great prophet and a doer of wonders had gone before him and reached the little town of Naim, but few of the townspeople had ever seen him, nor were they now prepared to see one of such commanding dignity combined with the most unaffected humility.

"He was a Nazarene. His hair fell in golden-brown ripples to his shoulders. The beard was full but rather short and of a shade or two lighter than the hair. The mouth of medium size, with lips thin and sensitive. The nose was long and straight, with distended nostrils. The color of his face, and especially of his brow, was the whiteness of marble, enhanced in beauty by a faint touch of color on the cheek-bones, and by the rich redness of the lips. The eyes, which were shaded by strong brown eyebrows, were the most remarkable feature of his countenance. They were large and beautiful, full and lustrous and of a dark blue. They seemed to speak of love and meekness, of strength and sympathy and kindness, and yet of dominating power. One glance of those eyes captivated my soul and I felt as if it were fluttering at his feet like a wounded dove.

"The influence of this wonderful man was felt by all present. The gathering waited for something, it knew not what. While we were gazing upon him, the Master began to

change in some intangible way. No one seemed to know how the difference came about, but all were conscious of it. He had come among them as one of them, although superior to them. Now, standing in front of the bier, he did not appear to grow larger, but there was manifested in him an attribute which was awing and overmastering. The everlasting holiness of Aaron, our great high priest, shone in him. He seemed to exemplify the kingly dignity of David, and you felt that he was wiser and greater than Solomon. Above and beyond all this, the consciousness was borne in on you that he was master of heaven and earth, of life and death, and of all the powers of the universe.

"Many of the awed assembly were already kneeling, expecting something, they knew not what, would take place. The widowed mother looked longingly at him through a mist of tears, for she had begun to weep again. Was there a glimmering of hope being lighted in her breast that the great prophet would do something for her in her inconsolable grief? Did her wildest flight of delirium of sorrow for one instant imagine —no, it was impossible that she should have thought of the wonder which was so soon to follow. The Master said to her:

"'Weep not.'

"Wondrously the fountain of her tears was dried, and there stole over her heart a feeling of resignation soft and sweet as the

first breath of spring. The Master then touched the bier, which had been lowered and placed on two trestles by the bearers. With an assumption of dignity and with a power which the spirits of the other world obey, he said, in a tone not loud but penetrating, which thrilled every hearer, and made the bereaved mother clasp her hands in an agony of suspense:

" 'Young man, I say to thee arise.'

"What if he should prove to be merely one of those false teachers pretending to work miracles! Oh, her despair would be the blacker for the flickering of hope!

"But see! the cere-clothes and swathing bands begin to give signs of life in the one enshrouded in them. There is a change in the corpse. That son, that precious lost one, her only support, begins to show signs of life! His eyelids twitch, his eyes open! He is alive! With an effort—the cere-clothes hinder—he takes a sitting posture. His struggles for freedom of movement burst the bands. He is free!

"The Master takes him by the hand and leads him a few paces. And he gives him to his mother. The woman, dazed as much by the miracle as by her own grief, at first does not comprehend, but with the warm clasp of her own precious boy's hand, full consciousness rushes back to the poor, tired, numbed brain. With a wild cry she throws herself into the arms of her son. They mingle their

tears of joy. He is safely back from beyond the grave. None but a mother can realize her ecstatic happiness. Amid laughter and tears of joy the two at length join in the Hallel, or song of praise, which the whole company is now singing; they turn to pour out their gratitude to their benefactor.

"While this shouting was at its height, and the excited people were praising the wonder-worker and congratulating the son and the mother, the Master and his company had quietly withdrawn. They were seen in the distance journeying towards the shore of the Lake of Genesareth. Dost thou now doubt of Christ's divinity, O Andros?"

"I doubt no more, if I ever doubted. None but a God could raise the dead to life by his own power."

Abdiel was well pleased.

"Thou art on the way to salvation," he said.

"Tell me, I beseech thee," said Andros, as he arose to depart, "the meaning of so large a gathering here to-day, and why they were so excited."

"A great event will soon take place in Ephesus. Before this happens, I hope thou wilt have the waters of baptism poured upon thy head. Then thou wilt know and fully realize all."

CHAPTER XXIII

NEMESIS

Nitros, the dwarf, proved of invaluable service to Andros, who daily congratulated himself on the acquisition of so faithful a servitor. Notwithstanding his unshapely form, and the fact that he was unaccustomed to the luxurious and refined ways of the household of one of the better class of Ephesians, he soon accommodated himself to his new conditions.

The master of the house permitted him to choose his own costume, and was surprised at the cleverness with which he selected those clothes which indicated his position in the house. Nitros chose a light crimson, or geranium-colored tunic of soft wool, over which he wore a purple cloak which helped to conceal the deformity between his shoulders. He wore the tight-fitting Ephesian trousers, which were of dark material and without the usual zigzag pattern. A bright yellow Phrygian cap above his raven hair, and a yellow belt, from which depended a short dagger and a jingling bunch of keys, gave him a rather picturesque appearance. Visitors regarded him as a unique kind of

major-domo in the house of their wealthy friend.

Soon after he had taken him into his household Andros tested him in several ways. He found that he was utterly honest. He paid him well, but to his surprise he discovered that the dwarf did not seem to care in the least for money, often refusing to take his wages altogether, or telling his master to take care of them for him.

His chief characteristic, as Andros soon discovered, was a dog-like attachment to himself. Before coming to Ephesus he had lived near the soil in his native forests where life was not complicated. He never seemed so pleased as when in the company of his master. His great pride was that he had been entrusted to watch the coffers of Andros when the latter was absent. The freedmen of the household, as well as the slaves, were at first inclined to imagine that he had been brought to them for their special amusement. It was not long before they discovered their mistake. Two scullions—full grown men, too—received their lesson. After some attempted practical joke on him, Nitros threw off his purple cloak and displayed his knotted, muscular arms. He took hold of the two men, and by sheer muscular force knocked their heads together several times and sent them spinning, one in one direction and the other in another. After that there was no more molestation, but rather a pro-

found, although somewhat servile, respect for his physical prowess.

There was one peculiarity in Nitros which puzzled Andros. Many times he enquired of his master whether he had ever suffered annoyance, or had been molested in any way by the priests of the Temple of Diana. "Hath aught been said or done to annoy thee, master?" was his frequent interrogation. Upon the answer in the negative being invariably given, Nitros would look relieved and then mutter something which sounded like a threat or a curse on some one.

"It will come, some day, and then thou must let me know of it, master. Promise me this."

Andros promised in an off-hand, amused way several times, until the enquiry and the request being repeated so often, at last made an impression on him. It was now in the beginning of the month of July. The Artemision festival for the year was long a thing of the past. The religious frenzy so common among some of the people during the festival had died down. The new thoughts concerning the Christ which he had learned from Abdiel filled the mind of Andros. He had never been farther away from the influence of Diana's priests than now. Why should Nitros ask the same question again and again? He determined to question him.

"Why dost thou imagine, Nitros, that I shall suffer molestation from the priests?"

The ex-furnace-tender's blushes could be seen through the swarthiness of his skin. He mumbled something not quite intelligible to Andros.

"Dost thou anticipate that an attack of some sort will be made upon me?"

"It shall not if I can prevent it, master. It might come. I know not. I am anxious for thy safety."

"Who would instigate them? I know of no one who is mine enemy."

"Every man, if he be a man, hath his enemies," said the dwarf sententiously.

"Whom dost thou think is mine?"

"I cannot tell. I cannot tell thee," was the somewhat enigmatic reply—the first sentence seeming to indicate that he was ignorant, and the second, that he was not at liberty to give the information.

"Doth this mean that thou dost not know, or that thou wilt not tell me?"

"O master, ask me no more. I will protect thee. What I desire to do, thou mayest forbid if thou knowest. Ask me no more."

Andros did not attach much importance to the words. He imagined that it was all a piece of overwrought gratitude on the part of the hunchback, who, perhaps, was seeing dangers where none existed.

Nitros would never consent to leave the house when he knew that his master was absent. In the evening, when Andros returned from looking after his various in-

terests, or from a visit to Elymas and Abdiel, Nitros would absent himself far into the night. His master had investigated and learned that he never entered the wine-shops, and that he did not seem to care for the best Ephesian pramnium wine. He therefore gave him a key to the outer door of his house. As a slave always slept in the atrium, the dwarf found no difficulty in reaching his own apartment, no matter at what hour of the night he returned. Nor did his master enquire of him the nature of his business in these night journeys. The man rose betimes in the morning, and was at his duty, and thus, as Andros had proven his honesty, he let him have his freedom.

The house of Andros was within a stone's throw of the southeast corner of the city port, a large body of artificial water in the heart of the city. This was fed by the river Silenus, or lower river, which was a branch of the Caystrus. The port was about one-half mile in length and one-third of a mile in width, the greater distance running east and west. It was surrounded by warehouses and had numberless wharves or piers. In front of the warehouses on all four sides of the port, and not far from the water's edge, was built a colonnade of arches which protected the merchants and traders from sun and rain. At all times of the day, and often far into the night, these colonnades and the wharves where the smaller sailing vessels

were moored were thronged with people. It was to the southern colonnade Nitros most frequently repaired on his night excursions. Here he met Scythians from his native country.

On the night of the interrogations by his master he selected one of these whom he could trust and sent him to bring Aratus to the water's edge. The dwarf had given his countryman a message which he knew would arouse the curiosity of Aratus.

"A new god hath arisen. Thy life is threatened. Come."

The message was somewhat Pythonic, as he intended it to appear. Nitros founded the first part on some vague information gathered concerning his master's opinions of the gods. He did not care one iota about the fact, for he lived apparently in total neglect of all the gods. His religion, since his change of circumstances, consisted in unbounded gratitude toward his benefactor.

The moon, three days past the full, shone brilliantly over the city and dusted the surface of the waters of the port with diamonds. Here and there, darted little pleasure craft, whose sails now appeared as dark as night, and again, as they caught the moon's rays, resembled the white wings of some large bird. Large barges, propelled more slowly, were filled with singing and drinking men and women, whose voices, softened by the distance, echoed and re-echoed along the

arches of the colonnade. The port was a favorite resort of Ephesians on summer nights. Laughter and song and music floated across the water.

The custodian of Andros' riches took little heed of the softened beauty of the scene. His mind was intent on one project. As the minutes flew by he noted with satisfaction the thinning of the number of pleasure boats on the water and of those people who paced up and down beneath arches in search of coolness. By an hour after midnight the port was deserted, with the exception of a few city guards who watched the immense warehouses during the night against fire or thieves.

He did not grow impatient at the delayed return of the messenger, yet he felt the waiting tedious. To carry out a previously settled plan he would disregard time and by sheer will-force dominate all opposing elements. Sitting motionless in the dark shadow of one of the arches he was not observed by the passing guard, or if he was seen was thought to be some tired traveler and allowed to sleep on unmolested. Nitros was not sleeping. Every sense was alert, every nerve tense, watching and waiting with a cat-like persistency which was at length rewarded.

"Nitros," whispered a voice from the deep shade behind him.

"Who?"

"Thy countryman."

"Hast thou brought him for whom I sent thee?"

"He is here."

The dwarf arose and went back into the deeper shade of the arches.

"Thou hast done well. Go now, and come here to-morrow night for thy reward."

"Is it thou, my—my fine bellows-blower? What—what meanest thou by thy strange message?"

It was Aratus who spoke. His voice was unsteady and husky, for he had partaken freely of pramnium that evening. He was in the good humor of a successful dice-thrower.

"Sit down here, thou money-borrower, thou man of three letters."

"How now! Dost thou dare to order me. Me—I mean I. Thou black Adonis! Thou hand—handsome Pluto!"

The dwarf saw that Aratus was so nearly incapable that it would be necessary, if his plan was to be successful, to act quickly before the fumes of the wine would render him insensible, or at least too sleepy to talk.

"Come, Aratus, come with me. It is hot and close in the arcade. Come down the port steps and we will sit near the water. It will be cooler there."

"Ver-very well. I will go. The city is not fit—fit for a—a patrician, in this hot weather. I must spend a month on the shore of the Icarian Sea. Didst ever hear the story of Icarus, dwarf? It's funny, very

funny. Never mind. Don't remember it myself just now. I will tell it to thee some other time. Lend me thine arm, good blacksmith. The falernian is going to my legs! Help me down these steps. Eh! Steady—steady now—there! that will do. This is much cooler—cooler than the esplanade. Thanks, slave. I see thou knowest how to treat one of a higher station in life than thine own. Didst bring a flask of wine? No! Then thou art—thou art—a—a fool."

"Aratus," said the dwarf sharply, in order to arrest the attention of a mind dulled by excess, "listen to me. Didst thou go to the priests concerning Andros?"

His dislike for his rival sobered him momentarily on hearing his name.

"No," he answered distinctly. "No, I regret I have delayed so far. To-morrow I will give the priests a banquet—I have some gold left yet—and then I'll fill their ears with my story. Let me see; what is it I am to say?"

"Never mind that now. Thou hast done nothing yet against him? Art thou sure?"

"Be not vexed, thou—thou furnace-tender. Time enough. I work for thee as well as myself. I begin to-morrow to make an end of him—may my curses go with him!"

Nitros was satisfied with what he had learned.

"Aratus! listen to me. Art thou listening?"

"No one saw Nitros, in the dark hole of the water-stairs, fumble in his tunic for a small vial." Page 231.

"Yes, yes, I hear thee, but I would thou hadst some wine."

"Give up thy plan. Thou shalt not harm him. If thou dost but touch him, or harm come to him through thee, thy life shall pay the forfeit."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Aratus, drunkenly. "Thou misshapen dog of Cerberus! Dost thou dare to command me! Ha! ha! —ha!"

The fumes of the wine were again asserting the mastery. Nitros saw that he would soon be asleep. A sudden thought came to the brain of the Scythian. What if he let him sleep here on the water-stairs, within a few inches of the water! At this landing-place he knew the water was at least ten feet deep. The cavern-like stairs in the embankment were in the densest shade. No one would discover the drunken sleeper, and—well, his new occupation had somewhat relaxed the strength of his fingers. He was not so sure he could clutch a man's throat so effectively as formerly.

He saw that drowsiness was fast stealing over the sitting form. He remained silent. It would be only a matter of a few minutes before Aratus would be unconscious. No one saw Nitros, in the dark hole of the water-stairs, fumble in his tunic for a small vial. Taking out the stopper, he held it near the sleeper's face. He was conscious of its pungent odor. Arachne had been sure in

the making. He placed his lips close to the mouth of the small bottle and blew the fumes of the poison again and again into the face of Aratus. Pausing for a moment, he once more blew the poison-laden vapor into the nostrils of the sleeper. With a certain amount of cunning he wound the drunken man's purse two or three times around his girdle. It would be evidence that the man had not been robbed.

When Nitros saw that Aratus was in a deep trance-like sleep, he arose and walked up the water-stairs to the esplanade above. He knew that a slight movement of the sleeper on the step just above the water would cause him to lose his balance.

The dwarf took up his position in the corner of the balustrade, overlooking the sleeper below. Peering down into the black darkness, he could discern nothing except the faint glimmer of one white hand hanging listlessly over the sleeper's knee. Without excitement, patiently he waited, a type of semi-barbaric persistence in gaining an end. His pulse did not change their steady beating. Fate would accomplish for him that which he desired.

The minutes glided on unobserved. The moon, long past her zenith, illuminated the waters with a weird yellowish light. He knew her rays would not penetrate the cavern of the water-stairs. He did not know how long the drunken stupor would last.

Yet with an infinite patience he stood motionless in the corner of the balustrade, peering down at the huddled figure on the lowest step.

The back of Aratus was against the masonry. That might steady him to some extent. No matter. He would become restless before long. Then he must lose his balance.

Probably for an hour Nitros waited thus, when his pulse quickened as he heard a slight movement below, and the drunken voice of Aratus mumbling some inarticulate sounds. Then there was a movement and a sudden splashing sound. A cry was choked by the smothering water. The dwarf saw two hands held up appealingly as the body sank beneath the surface in the dim moonlight. He watched with a species of fascination. The tragedy ended by the rising of a number of bubbles to the surface. They appeared for one moment like yellow diamonds on the water, and then vanished.

With a sound resembling the growl of an animal, Nitros turned from the place and wended his way homeward. He went into a tavern, and for the first time in his life swallowed a large draught of strong wine.

CHAPTER XXIV

REPULSED

The custodian of the coffers of the ship-owner and master fisherman was busy with his ordinary occupations early the next morning. Loss of sleep did not appear to affect him. Although he could not have slept more than two hours, he appeared to be refreshed and cheerful. He had gone out early to the market and purchased a supply of fresh flowers for the day with a lavish expenditure. Every vase and every vessel suitable for holding sprays of imprisoned perfume was filled.

When Andros emerged from his sleeping room, the dwarf was ready at his door with wine for his master's early morning refreshment. He looked around the room which Nitros had decorated so lavishly with pleased surprise. His one extravagance, if Andros could be said to have an extravagance, was flowers. He would have spent large sums in sending them to Lydda were it not that Mellanides cultivated the best to be found in Ephesus.

"Are we celebrating some great victory to-day, Nitros, that thou hast decorated the house so richly?"

"Nay, master, no particular victory. Yet the gods are good to thee."

"Dost think, then, that my money chest doth too much overflow?"

"Not so. But nothing is too good for thee, master. A house without flowers is as a woman without a wedding ring, or as a beautiful corpse without the light of life."

"Verily thou art a poet, Nitros. How fortunate was I to discover thee at the forge!"

"I thank the gods that thou didst so. Henceforth my life is thine. It were willingly lost in thy defence."

Nitros kept his secret concerning the fate of his master's rival. He was aware that the death of Aratus would soon be made public, at latest when the body floated. He knew that it would be impossible in the much traversed waters of one of the busiest ports in the world that the body would remain long undiscovered. His black beard and swarthy skin helped him to hide or disguise any passing emotion that might betray him. Although not uncouth, he possessed some of the stolidity of a primitive race and was in consequence troubled with fewer emotions, and, it may be, twinges of conscience, than his master would have suffered under the same circumstances.

The discovery was made much sooner than the hunchback expected. While Andros was at his morning meal, the slave who slept in the atrium came to him saying that

a messenger from his fish-steward of the agora venalis wished to see him. The messenger was told to enter.

"Good sir, thy steward hath sent me to tell thee that some men, early this morning, were standing at the corner of the esplanade overlooking the southeastern water-stairs, and that in looking down into the clear water at the foot they saw the body of a man who had been drowned during the night."

"Well, my good man," said Andros, in unconcern, "what interest have I in that? Will he not make good food for lampreys? The port waters have swallowed many a bankrupt spendthrift before now. Dost thou think there is anything startling in this?"

"But, sir, the city guard, with a long grappling hook, raised the body to the surface and pulled it to the lower step."

"Well?" said Andros, as he continued to pick daintily at his breakfast.

"Thy steward sent me to tell thee who it was that met his death last night."

"He is very considerate. Who may the unfortunate fellow be?"

"It is the body of Aratus."

"Aratus! Aratus sayest thou?" Andros jumped to his feet in the greatest excitement. He paced the floor several times, oblivious of the presence of the messenger. "You may go. Stay. Here is money," and he gave him

a silver coin. "Tell my steward I send him my thanks for his trouble."

The news affected Andros strongly. His first thought was that of intense satisfaction that his rival was out of his path.

"The gods be thanked," he said, but immediately checked himself, saying, "God, I thank thee."

In critical moments, or in moments of great excitement, the habits of a lifetime assert themselves. Do what he would, strive as he might to overcome the feeling which he instinctively felt to be unworthy of him, he could not help feeling rejoiced that the only one who was really a rival to him for the hand of Lydda was out of the way.

As a rival, he naturally wished him out of the field, but as a man he bore him no ill will, and in other circumstances he could have lived on friendly terms with Aratus, although the latter was of a character and disposition so diametrically opposite to his own that he would never have been on terms of familiarity.

"Nitros," he called, "Nitros, go to the agora. Go to the city port; go everywhere. Learn all thou canst of the death of Aratus. Do not delay thy return longer than is necessary."

A peculiar mission for the dwarf! His care on returning must be not to know too much, and thus divulge his own complicity. Within an hour he returned.

"Aratus was not robbed. His net purse was wrapped around his cincture securely. The city authorities think he was drunk and rolled down the steps of the water-stairs, but they find no bruises on his body. There were twelve gold pieces in his purse, enough to give him handsome cremation. The Jew money-lenders are frantic for the loss of the money they have advanced him on the prospect of his marriage with the daughter of Mellanides."

"Hath he done such a thing as that! Borrowed of the Jews to advance his suit with Lydda!"

"'Tis well known in the city, master; didst thou not know?"

"No."

Notwithstanding the exciting, and to him really regrettable, news, Andros could not help allowing his mind to dwell on the increased possibilities in favor of his suit. He well knew that old Mellanides and Lydda regarded Aratus as a lifelong acquaintance, and gave him as free an entry to their house as they accorded himself. He was aware, also, that while he was often for days engaged in his business of the fisheries, or looking after important cargoes in his shipping interests, Aratus, although he was known to have but scant visible means of support, seemed to have unlimited time at his disposal. How often had he spent that

time in the company of Lydda? What success had he achieved?

Ah! perhaps that strange excitement of Lydda, and its quickly followed coldness, were caused by some overture on the part of Aratus! He would delay no longer. He would this very day put the fate of his happiness to the test. That afternoon he repaired to the mansion of the old warrior.

"Welcome, welcome, my boy. Saidst thou that thou wert tired of coming to see me? Thou mightest live in Athens, or Rome or Alexandria, for the little we see of thee now. I like to see stalwart young men about me. Lydda will be glad to see thee, I am sure."

Thus chatted on the bluff old soldier whom Andros met on the lawn in front of the house.

"Ho! boys! slaves! run and get wine for Andros. Have it ready in the peristyle. Young men are always thirsty, eh, Andros? Well, old men—old soldiers at all events—can take their share of falernian, too! What news from Rome, boy? Are the legions starting out anywhere for fresh conquests? I hear little of the news now. Would that I were twenty years younger. I would follow the labarum again. Well, well, it is no use grumbling at fate. I hear there is likely to be trouble in Syria. Hast heard aught of it, Andros?"

In this way, with the garrulity of old age, he chatted on until they reached the house.

As soon as Mellanides had accompanied Andros to the presence of Lydda, forgetting the wine he had boasted of, he went away hurriedly out into his famous rose garden, where he spent many hours each day.

Once more Andros was enthralled by Lydda's wonderful beauty and womanly grace. She received him with the easy familiarity of old. The calm and poise she maintained as ever. The queenly pose, the graceful gestures of her long shapely arms, even the folds of her white Grecian drapery gave him the keenest pleasure. The more impassioned his love became, the farther away and the more unattainable she appeared. Would such manly, honest love never touch a responsive chord in her heart? Surely she could read his love in his face.

"What if I come, fairest of Ephesians, to put in practice the lessons thou hast taught me," he began.

"On the zither? That is delightful! I will have them brought. Girls—"

She turned to her slave girls in a far corner of the peristyle.

"No, no, Lydda. Thou mistakest. Rather on the heart-strings of the fairest of mortals!"

Lydda blushed slightly. Such words were sweet to her coming from one she loved in secret.

"Thou hast been a clever teacher. Saidst thou not to me how a woman should love?

Although thou wouldst not teach me a man's wooing, I think I have wit enough to see it doth not vary much from that of woman's."

"I remember that I told thee how a woman loves. Thou wert to tell me how a man should love and woo."

Andros was not certain whether she was in earnest, or merely like children in their games, rehearsing a play intended only for amusement.

"In this my heart shall be my teacher and I its docile pupil. This is how I would begin—"

Just at that moment the excited voice of Mellanides was heard calling:

"Ho! ho! Lydda! Lydda! Andros! Hast heard the news? 'Tis wonderful! Aratus is drowned in the Sacred Port—no, in the city port. His body was found this morning. Poor young man!"

"Aratus dead!" screamed Lydda, in a paroxysm of excitement. She rushed to Andros.

"Oh! oh! I am glad—glad! The gods—O Andros, Andros, thou dost not know! I feared him. I feared for my life. I hated him. He had sworn to make me his wife. Now he is dead—dead! Thou wouldst have protected me, wouldst thou not? Let us rejoice."

By the occasional catching of her breath it was plain that she was becoming hyster-

ical, notwithstanding the note of exultation in her voice.

"Calm thyself, dear lady. There is nought to fear. Seat thyself here and tell me all."

He gently pushed her down on the cushions of the marble bench. It was some minutes before she regained her composure. While waiting for her to recover, Andros was amazed at the sudden transitions from calm to the greatest emotionalism which she manifested. It was a phase of a highly sensitive woman's nature which he did not pretend to understand.

When she had regained control of herself sufficiently to be able to talk coherently, she told him of all the advances of Aratus, of his veiled threats, of his recently discovered impecuniosity, and of her fear of him. As the relation progressed he began to understand the reason of her strange conduct on his former visit. Mixed with the sentiment of anger that was taking possession of him was a feeling of gladness, arising from the acknowledged fact that she looked to him for protection.

"His shade is now in Orcus," said the lover. "Thou hast nothing more to fear from him. Hadst thou told me before of this annoyance, I would have protected thee, even with my life."

Lydda looked up suddenly. Gratitude shone in her large eyes, now wet with tears.

"I know thou wouldst, dear—friend."

"Friend! O my Lydda, may I not be, wilt thou not call me, more than mere friend? Lydda! Lydda! canst thou not see? Dost thou not know? Lydda, I love thee—love thee passionately, ardently. I offer thee a love such as no man ever offered woman before. Be mine. Give me the right to protect thee. I cannot live without thee. Wilt thou not crown my happiness by giving thyself to me?"

Lydda made to rise from her sitting posture. Andros quickly stretched forth his hand to assist her. She retained it when she stood in front of him. She then placed her other hand over his. He regarded this as a good omen.

"Andros, friend of my childhood," she said, "I will confess that I love thee. I have loved thee long."

A rapturous "Ah!" and he was about to fold her to his breast. She repelled the advance by an almost imperceptible stiffening of her arms.

"Listen, Andros. I love thee, and my affections can never be given to another. Yet —yet—oh, be not angry—I cannot marry thee. Ask me not to explain. Thou must have patience. If thou lovest me as thou sayest, time may clear the mystery for both of us."

"But, my love, listen one moment. I cannot live without thee! Thou art the sun of

my life! Send me not out into darkness. Have pity!"

"It cannot be!"

She took away her left hand, and as determinedly withdrew her right. Slowly her hands dropped to her side. Steadily looking into the face of Andros, but with eyes that glistened with moisture, as one in a dream she moved slowly away until at last she passed behind the arras of her own apartment.

Andros was dazed. He stood with his hands still supplicatingly outstretched towards the direction where she had disappeared. He seemed to be suffering from a horrible dream. As soon as his benumbed mind recovered from the shock it had received, he threw the folds of his toga over his shoulder, jumped the low parapet of the open side of the peristyle, and with long swinging steps made all haste for the city.

Mellanides, in his rose garden, seeing him, called:

"Ho! Andros! Ho! thou art not going so soon? Thou wilt stay for the evening meal?"

He heard the old man's kindly call, but did not heed it. Mellanides went at once to the house.

"Hast thou quarrelled with Andros?" he asked his daughter, sharply.

She answered simply:

"No."

CHAPTER XXV

THE GLORY OF THABOR

The rejected lover walked many miles that afternoon and evening. The shattering of all his hopes was a severe blow. Blindly he strode along, he knew nor cared not whither, at one time finding himself in the midst of the busy throng of the agora, and later threading the winding paths that crossed and recrossed each other in the grove of Diana. When he realized where he was, he turned from the place in disgust. At nightfall he found himself in the vicinity of the old house of Pelopidas, the residence of Elymas. He debated with himself whether he should, at this late hour, visit the family and disturb them with his troubles. Perhaps Abdiel was there. He could unfold to him all his disappointment and receive advice and consolation. Elymas, he knew, would prove a sympathetic listener. But why, he asked himself, should he upset the peace and serenity of this charitable family? Why bring disturbance into their calm lives? He had experienced so much kindness at their hands that he felt it would be ungrateful, and in a sense unfair, to make them the repository of his sorrows. And yet he was

in that state of mind in which he felt it imperative to unfold his grief to some one. Who would listen with more helpful sympathy than the members of this family?

Without conscious knowledge of how he arrived there he found himself on the porch of the farmhouse. He did not enter the house, but sat down, his elbows on his knees and his face buried in his hands, a prey to the most gloomy thoughts. His life's ambition seemed to have slipped away from him. He reviewed his career, scrutinizing himself severely, as if to find a justification in his own conduct for Lydda's rejection of him. His past, in the light of his new knowledge, was not such as to produce a favorable verdict, but judging himself by his former pagan standard he could not say that his life had been such that a woman who was a worshipper of Diana would reject him, even if she were acquainted with all its details.

He derived one benefit from his inspection. His new belief in the Christ made him conscious of the higher moral standard which would be demanded of him, and, withal, there was one golden thread of hope running through the tangled skein of his unhappy thoughts. Lydda had said she loved him. This was a joy and a consolation. What might he not yet hope for? Would she not some day be induced to change her mind when the unknown and intangible obstacle was removed?

He asked himself whether he had acted fairly and justly with her in not informing her of his change of faith. Would it have made any difference in the result? He could not tell. Oh! if Lydda could be induced to accept this new belief! At least she loved him. She had declared this. This was the one ray of cheering light in his gloom of soul. This was his golden thread of hope which, joined to the strong desire that at some time she would be brought to see the beauties of the new faith, caused him to throw off some of his depression.

How was he to set about converting her to the faith of Christ? The doubt came to him during his long evening cogitation whether action to this end on his part would be honorable. If she were to accept the new religion, it must be for its own sake, not for his. On the other hand, if she were finally to accept him—and he believed that in some way this would come to pass—she must accept him for his own sake, and not for any creed he held.

As he thought these things over, his desire became stronger to secure for her the new knowledge so lately acquired by himself. He saw plainly that after the events of that afternoon he could not be her instructor. Perhaps Elymas, or even Abdiel, would undertake the task.

Filled with a new hope, he knocked at the door. The family welcomed him as usual.

They were not surprised to see him so late at night, as his visits were made at any hour. Elymas thought that business interests kept him thus late on this occasion.

"Thou art a veritable night-bird," said Elymas, playfully, "yet thy room is ready. It is always saved for thee."

"Thanks, my worthy friend. May the Christ bless thee."

"And thine. May he bless thee, too."

"I fain would talk to thee in the garden, Elymas, if it be not too late for thee."

As they slowly paced up and down the garden path, Andros told him, first, of his bitter disappointment, and then of his reviving hopes, and finally of his project for the conversion of Lydda.

"Wilt thou go to her and teach her of the Christ?" he asked eagerly.

"Nay, nay, my impetuous friend, that can hardly be done. We do not go out at present to search for disciples here in Ephesus. Should the lady thou speakest of desire instruction, we would gladly give it. While the church in Ephesus is still in its infancy it would be folly to be too bold, and by inciting opposition, and perhaps persecution, to undo all we have done."

"Canst thou not suggest some other plan?"

"Thou hast in thine own power an effective means."

"What? Tell me. I will at once put it

into execution," said Andros, eagerly. "I will do anything if I may yet win her."

Elymas saw clearly the very human side of Andros' zeal, and smiled.

"Thou canst pray to the Christ that he may send her the light of faith as he hath sent it to thee. When thou hast received the holy waters on thy brow thy prayers will be more efficacious. Do not imagine, Andros, that I do not sympathize with thee in thy disappointment. My heart goes out to thee in sympathy. When thou art received into the mystical body of Christ thou wilt learn better how to bear trials and difficulties, and turn them to thine own good. I know thy heartache at the present time. I feel for thee. Perhaps it is the Christ who is testing thy soul now to reward thee with greater consolation in the future."

"I thank thee, Elymas. Thou hast always been my friend. Didst thou not tell me that the love of man for woman was one of the benignest gifts of God to man?"

"In the natural order, yes; and I repeat it; but forget not that there is an overruling Providence, son, that directs all things. Look at this event in the light of the new faith. Believe me, it is all for the best. Perhaps hadst thou won thy Lydda, she might have turned thee back to her false gods."

"Never!" said Andros, emphatically, "but I believe she would have come with me to the new one."

"May God grant that this may come to pass. She loveth thee, thou sayest; do not despair then of winning her. God directeth all things."

"Thou hast a faithful steward," continued Elymas, "in the market-place to look to thine interests. Thine absence from thine own house can be arranged. Stay with us for some time, Andros, and let Abdiel, who comes again to-morrow, and myself, finish thy instruction, so that thou wilt be ready to receive baptism. Thou knowest that thou art always welcome. Thy room is ready."

The prospect of spending a few days once more within the peaceful walls of the home of Elymas, in his present perturbed condition, was particularly inviting to Andros. The companionship of David, to whom he was sincerely attached, the kindly advice which the years and experience of Elymas rendered him capable of giving, and the religious instruction and the marvelous stories of the Christ which fell from the lips of Abdiel, were all inducements to him to accept the invitation.

"I will return to mine own house to-night, my kind friend, but I will be with thee by the noon meal to-morrow."

"Thou art welcome. When thou comest I will tell thee of the time I saw the Christ," said Elymas.

Andros walked home in better spirits than were his for many hours since the unpro-

pitious interview with the daughter of Mellanides. He wondered whether he would again be thrilled by the story of Elymas, as he had been by that of Abdiel.

The next evening saw the two sitting in the grape arbor where Abdiel had told his wonderful tale of Naim.

"Thou hast seen the Christ, too?" asked Andros.

"Aye, more than once," the other replied. "Wouldst thou hear the account of a great miracle? Before I came to this city my home was in Ascalon by the sea. I went to the holy city of Jerusalem frequently. Two years before the event I am about to relate, I saw the great Teacher. At the time this miracle took place I was again in Jerusalem.

"There was at this time an unrest among the followers of Christ. There had been marvelous stories circulated. Every one was looking for some portentous event to take place, yet none knew exactly what to expect. There were in Jerusalem probably five hundred people who accepted the divinity of Christ and worshipped him as God. All these, at this time, were, in some vague way, waiting for some great event to happen. A fair proportion of this number believed that Christ was about to establish his throne in Jerusalem.

"The divine Teacher had founded his Church and had given his apostles power to teach and baptize throughout the world.

One morning, the Lord came out into the streets of the city, openly showing himself to the people after his resurrection. Thou must know, O Andros, that he appeared to but few people, and only at intervals, after his coming back to life.

"The morning I mention he came into the streets, accompanied by his chosen band of apostles, his mother, and some of the women who had followed and ministered to him and his twelve for the past three years.

"I was standing in the street not far from the house whence they emerged. That which immediately impressed me was the exultation and joyousness that marked every countenance of that little group. I could only compare it to the consciousness in each of the sudden possession of some invaluable treasure. In a very short time little companies of two or three joined those who were going toward the fish-gate in the city wall towards the east.

"The size of the gathering continually increased as the word went from mouth to mouth that the risen Master was again in Jerusalem. By the time he passed through the city gate he was followed by several hundreds of men and women. His presence had a wonderful fascination for the multitude. From him seemed to emanate a joyousness that filled all hearts.

"I, who already believed, was influenced by an indefinable joy that was ringing in

my heart. It gave me courage to do and dare all for this great one whom all loved, and who, we felt, loved us all in so ineffable a manner that it is not easy to explain.

"As the great Teacher walked slowly along the Bethany road, he spoke freely with those who were near him. Never did he appear more fair or beautiful. Every trace of the cruelty of his sufferings had disappeared, except that we saw, with the greatest sense of awe, when in conversation he gracefully waved his hand, the mark of the wound the nail had made.

"I had seen the Master more than once before his passion. I regarded him at those times as the most beautiful of the sons of men. Now there was a different kind of beauty in him. The features were etherealized. In looking into that face it was difficult to imagine it was not in some way transparent. We caught, as it were, a faint glimpse of his divine nature shining through his human features. It made our hearts, notwithstanding the awe we felt, go out to him in love and adoration. As he talked, we felt that we were strengthened by his grace and marvelous love. I felt myself to be in the sweetest atmosphere of holiest peace. My heart expanded and I loved all mankind.

"Christ, having gone but a short distance outside the city wall, turned into a garden and walked to the summit of a small hill. Five hundred men and women grouped

themselves around him as he spoke. Never shall I forget that sea of loving, expectant, upturned faces! I stood near the top of the hill. Casting a glance towards the city, I saw with alarm that there was considerable commotion among the people gathered on the city wall near the fish-gate. The soldiers appeared uneasy at seeing so large a gathering near the city, probably expecting an uprising. I saw a Roman officer, whom I recognized as the one who had pierced the side of our Lord with a spear, talking and gesticulating to the people on the wall. He evidently reassured both the soldiers and the people, for the signs of excitement and the running to and fro suddenly ceased. I could see that many were endeavoring to secure a favorable position, in order to witness whatever was to take place.

"Some of our company who could not get near the small elevation in the garden filled the public road. From my position I saw these hindered the progress of a caravan of camels coming from the north through Jericho. Many of the tired beasts, as soon as their way was obstructed, at once lay down in the dust of the road. Others stood, meekly ruminating, swaying their long necks from side to side.

"Now the most marvelous thing in the world began to happen. Christ continued to speak, and as he did so I imagined there was an increase in the height of his stature,

but on looking closer I found I was mistaken. Looking down to the rock on which he was standing, I found that, instead of increasing in stature, he was not standing upon the ground, but was in the air several inches above it.

"Very slowly he began to rise. When he was about a head and shoulders above the amazed company, he raised his right hand and blessed them all with the sign of the cross. I do not know the length of time occupied in the ascension. We lost all remembrance of the passing minutes in our awed amazement. After the blessing given to the multitude, and one long, loving look at his holy mother, the Lord ascended higher. With hands now upraised, as if impatient for the embrace of his heavenly Father, he slowly ascended. Then we caught again another faint glimpse of the ineffable majesty of his divinity. His garments became effulgent. Never, never shall I forget that wonderful vision. A brightness surrounded him that was almost blinding to our mortal sight.

"'Thabor! Thabor again!' I heard Peter say, in an awed whisper.

"We on the summit of the hill dropped on our knees. Slowly the great figure was still ascending. Long we gazed with aching eyes. Brilliant and ever more brilliant became the light that surrounded him. Awed and breathless we remained gazing, while

far up in the heavens he appeared, not obscurely, but as clearly as we had seen him a few minutes before standing with us on the summit.

"Then it appeared, in the haze of light which began to surround him and shed its refulgence on us below, as if thousands of bright spirits came to meet and welcome him. Whether they were the bright inhabitants of heaven I could not be sure, because the divine presence began to be less clear to our vision. A glorious haze enveloped him. The outlines of his form grew gradually indistinct, until the sight of his presence was hidden in the cloud.

"In ecstatic adoration our faces were still turned heavenward when we witnessed another wonder! Two bright beings, shining as the sun, appeared to cleave the vapors of the cloud. At first there was nothing to be seen except, as it were, two brilliant globes of light. In a few moments the brilliancy grew stronger and from the cloud emerged two angelic forms. Slowly and with infinite grace they descended to the earth where we were. We were excited, as is natural, with all these marvels. We were also filled with the most consoling joy. Their appearance and message was a confirmation that we had not been under some illusion in what we had witnessed.

" 'Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking up into heaven? This Jesus, who is taken

up from you into heaven, shall so come as ye have seen him going into heaven.'

"We needed not the angels' confirmation of what we ourselves had witnessed, yet the message filled our hearts with a superabundant flood of happiness.

"Amid our exultation of heart and our exaltation of mind, amid all the sweet consolation there was present one touch of pathos. Perhaps it accentuated our happiness, as a discord brings into greater prominence the harmony of music. The Lord gave us the last proof of his divinity by ascending into heaven by his own power, but he left his holy mother behind.

"None but those who saw her face at that supreme moment will ever fully realize what parting means! What longing was shown on her face! While bowing with absolute submission and with all the powers of her soul, yet she was losing—her son! Her whole soul was in her eyes as she followed his receding figure. At the close of this most tremendous scene in the world's history, Mary appeared overwrought and almost exhausted by the excess of her varied and contending emotions. John, to whose care she had been confided, led her away to his home."

"Having come into the world, why did Christ leave it?" asked Andros, who with breathless eagerness drank in the wonderful story. In the light of the moon Elymas

could see the young man's eyes flash in his excitement, and his face flush, and hear his breathing shorten as the story proceeded.

"For this reason, for one, my son," replied Elymas, "that his followers should henceforth have the merit of faith. It is our duty as followers of Christ to conform our lives to the teachings he has given us. Small merit would attach itself to us for our obedience if we were always under the spell of his wonderful presence. Henceforth the just must live by faith, and faith is the evidence of things not seen."

The relation of Mary's part in the ascension had deeply interested Andros.

"Oh! could I but once see her!" he exclaimed, with great fervor, "could I but once look upon her who bore the Saviour, hov privileged I should be! Methinks I shall take the journey to Jerusalem to see this holiest one."

"Thou hast no need. Rememberest thou the excitement, and the number of visitors coming and going to my house not long ago? I promised I would explain. This commotion was caused by information having reached the believers in Christ who dwell in Ephesus that the Apostle John and the Mother of Christ are about to come to this city. Persecutions against his followers have begun in Judea. Following their divine Master's instructions concerning those

who persecute us, they leave, at least for a time, their ungrateful land."

"And shall I—I—be privileged to look upon this wonderful one! I had almost said, this goddess, but I know that is false."

"Yes, that is false," said Elymas. "Although her son was divine she is not divine, yet she is the one creature nearest to the Godhead, the most exalted of created beings, for she hath given to the world a Saviour."

"I can easily understand that she is the greatest of created beings in the universe. Veneration for her is the most logical result of her high dignity."

"When thou hast been admitted to the sacred mysteries thou shalt see her."

CHAPTER XXVI

WHERE LOVE MEETS FAITH

The instruction of Andros proceeded satisfactorily. In a short time he was regenerated in the waters of baptism. He found that the deeper he investigated into the truths of the religion of Christ the fuller became the satisfaction of his enquiring mind. He saw that he had embraced no shadowy belief, vaguely founded on fable, but a compact and coherent system of doctrine and precept, adapted to satisfy the enquiries of the loftiest intellect and the simplest mind. The mode of life it prescribed and which was exemplified by all the believers in the city—and Andros was astonished when he learned of their numbers—accorded with his ideas of what a man should be and do. The life of the followers of Diana had displeased and disgusted him by the licentiousness practiced in the name of religion. His aspirations for a purer worship found their fruition in the religion in which he was daily being more fully instructed.

The joy of heart which he experienced subsequent to his baptism was very great. One effect of this was his desire to go out into the streets, the agora, the circus, preach-

ing the new doctrine. This fervor was to be used in after years to good effect, but being at present only the untried and probably injudicious zeal of the neophyte, he was restrained by Abdiel and his friend Elymas.

His consolation and satisfaction on being admitted for the first time to the Christian mysteries, was proportionate to the awe which fell upon him when he realized their tremendous import. It was then that he learned the meaning of those mysterious sounds he first heard when he fled to the house of Elymas for safety. He had heard many voices repeating psalms and prayers.

When, at last, he was permitted to participate in the mysteries, which was not for some time after he had been allowed to be present, his exultation was so great that he thought there was nothing lacking to him to make him completely happy but to die at once.

The greater the ardor with which he followed the teachings of Abdiel, who went from one little community to another, instructing, baptising, and offering the sacred mysteries for the ever-increasing number of converts, the less did his own personal disappointment with regard to his rejection by Lydda appear. At times of peculiarly great fervor he forgot her altogether, but whenever this fervor cooled, or the tension of mind relaxed from the consideration of supernatural things, his love for her and the

grief at the loss of her came back with redoubled force.

At length, after many days of delay, David, the son of Elymas, was sent to the house of Andros to inform him that the two great personages had arrived in Ephesus. David did not know where they were sojourning. He was sent to invite Andros to his father's house on the following day that he might meet John, the apostle whom Jesus loved.

"But the great Mary! Am I not to see her as well?" asked Andros in great excitement.

"My father hath not told me. My message was to thee that John would come to our house. It may be that we are not holy enough to be admitted to the presence of the mother of Christ!"

"Tell thy good father that I will be with him at the sixth hour, in time for the noonday meal."

Andros, although his expectations ran high, and his fervor was kindled at the prospect of seeing one who was so long in the company of the Lord, was unprepared to see John as he was at this stage of his apostolic career.

He appeared to Andros to be a tall, muscular man, with broad shoulders and long arms. He stood perfectly erect with an almost military precision in all his movements. When Andros arrived he caught his first glimpse of John, who was at that

moment walking in the garden. By the way that he planted his feet firmly on the ground, Andros at once knew that he was a man of more than ordinary decision of character. When the new convert spoke with him he observed the characteristic of incisiveness and clearness of thought, for the words were clean-cut and sharp, although not brusque.

Andros could not but recall the description which Abdiel had given of the personal appearance of Christ, whom the latter had seen at Naim. He compared the picture of his memory with the man before him. He found there was a strong resemblance. John's hair was long and of the same golden-brown as Christ's. His eyes were dark-blue and full of love. The nose was straight, and the lips were rather thin, but red with the color of health. His face was not white. It was much tanned, as if frequently exposed to sun and wind in long journeys.

Although it was now many years since he relinquished the rough occupation of a fisherman on the sea of Galilee at the call of his Master, yet his hands still bore the marks of hard toil and were strong and vigorous, notwithstanding the fingers were long and tapering and the wrists small. The lip and the prominent part of the chin were covered with light brown hair of short growth which did not hide the manly contour of the jaw. The hair, slightly wavy, enhanced the charm of a handsome face which was manly and sin-

cere. The eyebrows were a shade or two darker than the hair on the lip. In this first short visit to the city of Diana, where afterwards he was to spend so many years of his life, the apostle appeared to be in the full prime of vigorous manhood.

While the features, individually, were nothing remarkable, the face was very pleasing. The countenance indicated surpassing moral strength. In the glance of the eye one saw a restrained fire—a moral power which could conquer a world. Gentleness and extraordinary meekness were untinged with the slightest weakness of character. At once the observer realized that John had a profound insight into character, coupled with the tenderness of a mother for the erring. Decision and strength were in the eagle glance of the eye. The sensitive quivering of the lips, responsive to any passing emotion, showed also that if the occasion required he could be not only the man of iron, but the gentle, sympathetic friend to the wavering and the timid.

Above all this there was a dignity which set him apart from the rest of men. It encompassed him, and no one of the followers of his Master was ever known to intrench upon it. At the Last Supper he reclined upon the Saviour's breast, and at the foot of the cross it had been given to him to care for the Mother of Christ. These two tremendous facts set him apart from the rest

of believers. This companionship left an indelible mark upon him which the rest of the world recognized and honored.

The new convert had often heard from his friends such marvelous reports concerning John that he sometimes feared that his expectations had been placed too high. He remembered as one of the bitterest moments of his life the disillusion and the shattering of an ideal, as well as the disgust which followed, when for the first time he saw the great statue of Diana. He was learning, with advancing years, that the reality often falls short of a previous concept. He was somewhat afraid of a repetition of former experience when he should meet the apostle. His expectations, however, were not disappointed.

Although John said or did but little to Andros except receive him with a winning grace, there was something about him which filled Andros with a reverential love, which never cooled in after years. The apostle's influence over the little company of believers in the city was profound, and Andros was soon as completely under its power as the rest. His whole life was to feel its effect, for when he whom Jesus loved returned again to Ephesus in after years, the mastershipman was one of his most valued assistants in the spreading of the faith.

A few days later Andros was again in his company. At this time he was suffering

from one of those mental reactions to which high-strung natures are sometimes subject. The ecstatically joyous condition of the soul had somewhat subsided. He was now viewing the long vista of his future years in a rather gloomy mood.

Andros was wealthy and used to luxury, at least in a moderate way. His house was sumptuously furnished. He had never known the want of money, nor the absence of the niceties of life such as money can purchase. Would he be required to distribute his wealth among the poor of the little Christian communities? Could he be content to live even the simple, honest, rustic life of Elymas? The prospect appeared to him a gloomy one, although no word on this subject had been said to him by his friends. It was a phase of mental condition not uncommon to those in his position, although it was new to him and therefore harassing.

Suddenly his memory arrayed itself against him. There flashed through his mind pictures of the color and beauty and brilliancy of some of the functions of the worship of Diana. The contrast of these and the present quiet and sombre worship of the Christians was startling. The ritual processions in their most ideal forms, as youth sees them, the flower sacrifices of the Artemision, came vividly before him in all their alluring brilliancy and fascination.

How beautiful everything now appeared which he had renounced forever! Were light and beauty, grace of form and nature's choicest gifts to be renounced forever?

To add to his annoyance, Abdiel and Elymas, for some reason unknown to him, delayed in complying with his request to be taken to see the mother of Christ. They vouchsafed him no explanation of their refusal to comply with his often expressed desire, which, after having heard so much about this holy and venerable person, was a most natural one. He would have ventured to make the visit alone, but they had carefully hidden from him the location of her dwelling-place.

"I will see the great John," he said with sudden resolve. "He will surely take me to the mother of the Saviour."

The apostle, as soon as he saw the young man's gloomy countenance, surmised the cause of his depression.

"Thou art discouraged, my son. What thou hast undertaken appears too hard and too great—now?"

Andros nodded a gloomy assent.

"Make no change whilst thou art in this spirit," continued John. "This is not the time. The sunshine of thy mind will soon come again. Now thou canst see but one step in the mist of the mountain side. Then thou wilt laugh at what now appears hard and insurmountable."

Encouraged by John's kindly, sympathetic manner, Andros told him how gloomy appeared the future. "My mode of life," he said, after he had manifested all his difficulties, "is different from that of these good people. Must I, while adopting their faith in Christ, adopt also their manner of living?"

"That is not necessary, if thou findest repugnance therein, although it is the more perfect way. Christ can be served in every honest state of life. Know ye that already there are believers in the very household of the Emperor?"

Andros thanked him. Already the clouds of depression seemed to be rolling away.

"In the beginning," continued the apostle, "all believers sold their goods and brought the price to the feet of Peter, and lived the common life. Already it is found that, by the increase in numbers of those who follow the God-man, this method of living is not available for all. Thou seest that thy friend Elymas liveth with his family only. There are, too, many believers who are living in their own houses, or as servants to pagans."

"I thank thee, sir. For the present I do not desire to relinquish my properties."

"See that thou live not above thy station in luxurious extravagance and thou canst be happy, provided thou rememberest thine obligations toward the necessitous. From what I know of thee I am sure thou couldst not be happy if thou wert aware that some

of thy brethren in the faith were wanting bread."

"Indeed I could not, good sir. I will send abundant alms to him whom thou dost appoint to receive and distribute it."

"Thou shalt be blessed in so doing. Yet another thing is clouding thy mind. I see thou art partially blinded by the glitter and glamour of the sensuous-dominating worship of this city, where her genius and her art are all-pervading. I grant thee that Diana is known and worshipped under some form or other in every part of the world. But I, John, tell thee with the knowledge of prophecy that this worship shall pass away so that there shall not remain a vestige of it."

"Impossible!" exclaimed Andros.

"With God all things are possible. Thou art half ashamed of our little, humble church now with its few poor followers and humble beginnings, but I tell thee, Andros, that this church shall last to the end of time. It shall spread to the uttermost parts of the earth. In future years the world shall have or know nothing greater, nothing grander. The gorgeousness of its ceremonial, in the ages to come, shall surpass the wildest flights of the poet's fancy. The nations of the earth shall bow before her, and kings shall be honored if she accept their gifts. Many kings, in the course of ages, shall lay their crowns at the feet of Peter. She shall say with truth, 'By me kings rule and legislators decree what is

just.' Her enemies shall bow their necks before her, and their impotent rage she shall laugh to scorn. Three kings bowed in lowly adoration at the birth of Christ, and kings shall ever be found to worship in her temples.

"Thou thinkest that the temple of Diana is the farthest limit of man's creative skill. In many lands fanes shall arise that shall so far exceed it that by comparison it shall be but as a fisherman's hut by the riverside. The whole earth shall be filled with the magnificence of the temples of the God of hosts. Kings shall bring their gold, and princes their treasures for their adorning. These temples shall be grand and glorious, for in them forever shall dwell the Lord of the whole earth. People shall enter their courts with fear and trembling, for the Lord God Almighty shall dwell therein.

"From the gates of his temples shall flow healing for the children of men. From thence shall come the purification of the nations, and all shall call upon His name. Great is the God of our fathers who hath established his law in our hearts. His reign shall be the reign of love, and his church shall be the bride of the eternal ages, adorned with the merits of her founder and the holiness of her children. She is the queen of time. Her reign shall never cease. Canst thou not, O Andros, see the wondrous vision? Art thou not proud to be incorporated into such a

body that shall perpetuate the reign of Christ in the souls of men forever?"

"Yes! yes! I see her glorious destiny. She shall become the mistress of the world!" exclaimed the young convert, all his gloom now dissipated by this unfolding of the future glories of the church. He had caught a spark of the enthusiasm which was so characteristic of John. He would not, however, be diverted from the object of his visit.

"Tell me, O friend of Christ, when wilt thou permit that I see with mine own eyes the great Mother?"

John recognized the yearning tone of his voice, and a chord of sympathy in his own breast was touched.

"Thou and I and David and Abdiel shall go at once. There hath been some necessary delay. Thou wilt understand ere long."

The apostle looked significantly at David. They both smiled in the knowledge of a mutual secret. Andros was all eagerness to start at once. The little company crossed the city to the north at a rapid pace until they came to the banks of the river Caystrus, about half a mile east of the mansion of Mellanides.

Having crossed the river, Andros walked as in a dream through the beautiful woods, until they came to a large stone house, where they were at once admitted. After a short rest, during which refreshments were set be-

fore them, a matronly woman appeared and greeted the young Ephesian Christian.

"Thou art not entirely unknown here," she said; "the daughter of Mellanides hath often spoken of thee."

"Art thou the good woman who helped her when she met with the accident in the forest?"

"That was my good fortune, young sir."

"Let me add my gratitude to hers for thy kindly deed. Would that she had come to thee as often as I have gone to Elymas, and with the same happy result. Thou knowest that I have been admitted to, and partaken of, the Christian mysteries?"

"So Abdiel hath informed us, and he hath told us likewise of thy rejection by the one thou lovest."

"Ah!" sighed Andros, "happy as I am in my new faith, I fear me I have lost her."

"Thou wouldst not marry a worshipper of Diana?" asked the woman.

"How would it be possible? How could there be union of heart, or fullest confidence? It were impossible."

"Thou didst tell her of thy change of faith?"

"Nay, I tried to win her with little thought of these things. When she rejected me, we were both of the same belief."

"Art thou sure of that, Andros?"

"Yes, although to be more exact, I was

beginning then to be regarded as a neophyte by the Christian family of Elymas."

A significant smile, which was unseen by Andros, passed between the elderly woman and those who were listening.

"Wouldst thou not wish to see her again?"

"Ah! that would I, but I fear the meeting would result in nothing, and perhaps be painful to both. God hath been so good to me that I must be content with the great gifts he hath already given."

"What thinkest thou, Andros," asked Abdiel, the priest, "is the greatest gift God hath bestowed upon thee?"

"The knowledge of himself—the true God," answered Andros emphatically.

"And wouldst thou be content with this and be willing to relinquish the chance of gaining Lydda as thy wife?"

"I would do anything compatible with my newly found faith to win her, but alas! I fear that will never be."

Again there were significant glances interchanged among the little group surrounding the young Ephesian.

"Those of different belief could not marry, you mean?" asked Abdiel.

"I do not say that," replied Andros, "but I do not think I could marry an unbeliever even if she were—were Lydda."

The thought was painful to Andros, and he sighed deeply.

"Oh!" he continued, "if she could be but

brought into the Christian fold! She hath admitted that she loves me, but for some mysterious and unexplained reason she declared that she could not marry me. She refused me as a pagan. Would she, do you think, do the same if she knew that I was a Christian and became one herself?"

The elderly matron agreed with Abdiel when he gave it as his opinion that there was a probability of his being accepted should Lydda accept the faith and become a Christian.

"Then she must! she shall!" he exclaimed impetuously. "I will devote my life to this work. I will give all my wealth to this end. I am sure she will put no obstacles in the way to prevent the light of faith penetrating her heart and illuminating her intellect. Oh! Abdiel my friend, priest of the one true God, wilt thou not instruct her? I will lend my aid. I will argue with her. She will listen. I will teach her all I know. I will go at once. The residence of Mellanides is not many paces from here."

He made as if he would put into immediate execution his newly formed project.

"Patience, my son," said Abdiel, smiling at the impetuosity of the lover. He recognized the very evident mundane foundation of the zeal of the young Christian.

"Would thy motive, Andros, be entirely single?" he asked.

"I—I thought not of the motive, good

Abdiel. If we succeed in converting her and I gain her, is not that motive enough?"

Abdiel laughed quietly at the eagerness of the lover. He regarded him affectionately for some time, for he, in common with all the Christians of Ephesus, had the kindliest feelings towards the bright young Ephesian.

"Scarcely a sufficient motive for the end to be attained, my son," he said. "Thou hast no need, however, to go to the house of Mellanides. It may be thou wilt soon meet with Lydda, for she is now under this roof, and is with the young maidens in another part of the house."

"Lydda here! So near! Let me go to her."

Turning to the matron, he said:

"Thou hast told me that she often cometh here. I am fortunate. Take me to her, I pray thee."

Abdiel and the elderly woman, both still amused at his impetuosity, conducted him the length of a long corridor to the other end of the large mansion. On entering a room, he saw six or seven young women engaged in various occupations of spinning flax, or in needlework.

The matron signalled to one of these, who immediately left the room and returned a moment later, bringing forward an extremely nervous but stately young woman clad in a white robe. She was nervously fingering a little silver fish which was at-

tached to a light chain she wore around her neck.

Andros stood for a moment as one in a daze. The woman he loved wearing the fish —the emblem of Christianity! Could it be that his Lydda was—but no; such happiness could not be for him. He had merited no such bliss. She was still in the darkness of paganism and idolatry. And yet that emblem! What did it all mean?

"Lydda! my Lydda!"

Not sure as yet whether his senses were not deceiving him, he strode rapidly over to where she was standing.

"Thou! thou a Christian!"

A faint blush overspread her countenance as, not trusting herself to speak, she nodded assent.

"Oh! then my joy is complete! thou lovest me; thou hast said it. My love! my love!"

"And mine," she answered. "I refused thee, Andros, believing thou wert still a pagan. Didst thou not know that I gave up the worship of Diana these many months?"

"I knew it not. Tell me how it all came about," said Andros ecstatically, and the daughter of Mellanides answered simply:

"The great Mother is here."

"Come, Andros," said John, who entered at that moment, "she waits for thee."

The great apostle led the young convert into the presence of the mother of Christ, and left him alone with her.

It was then that Andros learned from the lips of the Mother of the Church those deeper mysteries of faith which made him a tower of strength to others, and gave him the courage in the time to come to devote his wealth, and eventually to give his life for the truth of the faith he had received.

As the great apostle let fall the arras he saw the young man drop upon his knees, overpowered by the majesty and supernal holiness of her whom brush of artist, inspiration of poet, or pen of writer has never yet succeeded in adequately portraying.

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